

THE Saturday Journal

A POPULAR PAPER WEEKLY PLEASURE & PROFIT

Vol. I. No. 12.

BEADLE AND COMPANY, PUBLISHERS,
98 William Street.

NEW YORK, JUNE 4, 1870.

TERMS: \$3.50 per Annum, in advance.
\$1.25 for Six Months.

Price 5 Cents.

BLIGHTED: OR THE SHIP OF THE SPANISH MAIN.

BY J. W. BELLAW.

A shallow reach of sea,
A low-lying shore of sand,
Where all things seem to be
Dead under a dead hand!
There waves ne'er woo a wind,
And tides ne'er rise nor fall,
An hour centuries behind,
Behold the ruin of all.
For shoreward stood the gale,
And a shattered ship was borne
Over seas with shuddering sail,
Between the night and morn—
Came up the steep storm-path,
The dead upon its deck,
Ghastly with scar and scathe
Caught in the battle-wreck.
Till in the shining of no star,
And in the rush of doom,
It struck the beaten bar
And stuck for time to come.
Far fled the storm, and died
The wild life of the wave;
Dumb calm fell on the tide,
Impregnable as the grave.
But, phantom-fitting crowds
With eyes made fierce with flame,
And the corpses without shrouds
Cumbered the deck like blaine.
The rose died in close bowers,
And the dwellers of that land
Not in any clime of ours—
Departed in a band.
While wide on sea and shore
A rimming mist up-curled,
Closing all forevermore
From motion of the world.
Still half in thickening seas,
And half in anchored air,
Unhewn by any breeze
From lands or seas more fair—
In the half-night of the noon,
And double-dark of night,
With its pestilential swoon
And its perpetual blight—
With on its decks the dead
And the rust upon its chains,
On the prow the hideous head,
Leans the ship of the Spanish Main.

The Ace of Spades:

OR,

IOLA, THE STREET SWEEPER.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN.

CHAPTER XI.

THE GIRL THAT SAVED THE "MARQUIS."

The unknown guide who had come so timely to the aid of the two men proved to be Iola, the street-sweeper. Catterton could not repress a cry of astonishment. "Iola!" he said. "The street-sweeper, by jingo!" ejaculated Jim, in an undertone. "You remember my name, then?" exclaimed the girl, and a glad smile illuminated her pretty face; for she was pretty—very pretty. Being, however, her features were no longer concealed by the dark, ugly hood. Her face was round and plump, the bloom of health was upon her cheeks, despite the evident misery of her way of living. Her hair was of a fair yellow tint. The eyes a deep blue. The whole face expressed gentleness and purity. The "Marquis" gazed upon the features of the young girl in astonishment. Dimly through his mind floated a remembrance of a face strangely like the one he now looked upon. But where he had seen that face, or when he could not tell, for he felt sure that he had never seen the street-sweeper before meeting her on the Broadway crossing. "I do not forget as easily as you seem to imagine," said Catterton; "you remember me, why should I forget you?" "Ah, but you did me a service," quickly replied the girl. "Well, you have repaid that service to-night, so that we are even—no, not even; for you have saved our lives, while I only saved you from a blow. So you see we are in your debt," said the "Marquis." "But how did you know that we were in the dance house and in danger?" "I received your message," said Iola. "The boy brought it then?" "Yes, and then as I came down to see you I saw English Bill and the other dreadful men go into the saloon. I knew that you were in there—for shortly had told me so—and I guessed that you were in danger. So I told shortly that you must be saved. He saw that you were near the end door, and told me when he turned off the gas, to open the door and let you through." "So to the newsboy's plan, carried out by you, we owe our safety?" "Yes." "My hies!" muttered Jim, in an undertone, "and I was a-goin' to wring that young 'un's neck. Next time I see 'im, I'll buy a whole stock of papers from 'im." "I brought you here, because I knew that this would be the last place that they would think of looking for you," said Iola. "And is this your home?" asked Catterton. "Yes." "And English Bill?" "Lives down-stairs." "And are you really this ruffian's child?" asked the "Marquis," hardly able to credit that the ruffian could be her father. "Yes," the girl answered, sadly. "But you do not resemble him in the least." "No, I take after my mother." "And your mother?" the "Marquis" asked. "She died five years ago." "And she looked like you?" "Yes, sir, her hair was the same color as mine and her eyes also," the girl answered.

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THEN THE DOOR SUDDENLY OPENED, AND THERE, IN THE ENTRANCE, STOOD LOYAL TREMAINE.

"What was the cause of your mother's death?" "She was burnt to death, sir," sorrowfully answered the girl. "Is it possible?" asked the "Marquis," feeling a deep sympathy for the poor girl before him. "Yes, sir, she was a ballet-girl in the theater. In a play in which she was a fairy, her dress took fire and the burns were fatal. When my mother was alive we lived in a tenement-house in Mott street; it was a poor place, but much better than this. I went to school then; but since mother died Bill has treated me very cruelly and has made me sweep crossings." "Iola is a strange name," Catterton observed. "Yes, it was my mother's name." "What is English Bill's last name?" "Thompson." "If this Bill treats you so badly, you can not respect him very much." "I hate him!" cried the girl, while her mild blue eyes flashed fire. "I hate him and I have never called him father." "Would you like to leave him?" asked the "Marquis," rather astonished at this display of spirit in the quiet, sorrowful girl. "I would run away, to-morrow, if I only knew where to go," Iola answered, with an air of determination. "Iola, you have saved my life and I wish in some way to repay the debt," said Catterton. "Oh, don't speak of that, please!" cried the girl, quickly. "Yes, but I must speak of it and think of it too," returned the "Marquis." "I wish to take you from this life you are leading. In some drunken fit, this ruffian will either kill you or disable you for life. Will you accept my protection? Will you let me be a brother to you—a good and faithful brother? I had a sister once and her eyes were blue like yours. She, if living, would be about the same age that you are now. Will you come and supply the place of that sister?" The gleam of happiness upon the face of the street-sweeper showed her joy at the offer. "But Bill," she said, and a shade passed over her face, "he will never let me leave him." "We shan't ask his permission," coolly replied the "Marquis." "I have a friend on Canal street who is foreman of a paper box manufactory. He employs a great many girls; the work is light and you can easily learn. I know too of a nice boarding house on Grand street, close by the manufactory, kept by a widow lady. She'll take as much care of you as a mother. Iola, will you leave this den of infamy and trust to my protection?" "Yes," answered the girl, unhesitatingly, giving her hand into the outstretched palm of the young man. The hand of the "Marquis" trembled at the contact; the pressure of the little hand thrilled through him like an electric shock. "To-morrow, then, I'll meet you on Broadway, at ten o'clock, by the Astor House; the very spot where I first saw you," said Catterton. "I'll come," simply replied the girl. "I shall expect you. English Bill will not be apt to discover your refuge unless by accident, and even then, unless you consent to go with him willingly, his well-known bad character will prevent his applying to the courts to force you to return." "Of my own free will, I will never return to him. I would rather die than to longer lead the life that I have been living!" exclaimed Iola, her pale cheeks flushed with color. The "Marquis" gazed at the girl with a

puzzled look. Vainly he searched his memory over, he could not remember where he had seen her face before. The girl noticed the look. "Why do you gaze at me so strangely?" she asked. "Because your face seems so familiar to me, and yet I do not think I ever saw you before the other night," answered Catterton. "I am sure that I never saw you," said Iola. "I have it," cried the "Marquis" as a sudden thought flashed across his brain. "I have seen your mother on the stage; that is it! And your face recalls her to me!" The "Marquis" felt satisfied that he had hit upon the true solution of the mystery. "To-morrow, then," said Iola. "Yes, to-morrow you will cease to be a street-sweeper and join the great army of the working-girls of New York." "Oh, I shall be so happy away from this dreadful place!" murmured Iola. "Do you live here alone?" asked Catterton. "No, Bill's cook, Irish Molly, lives with me here." "Then Bill has a cook?" "Yes." "And does Bill beat her too?" "No, she is big enough to beat him." "Where is she now?" asked Catterton. "On Broadway, begging." "Thank Heaven, to-morrow will get you out of this den!" "I hope so," said the girl, and the tone told well how deep was that hope. "Now for a retreat," said the "Marquis." "Let me go first and see if the way is clear," said Iola, quickly. "Wait till I return," and the next instant she disappeared in the gloom of the stairway. "She's a trump!" said Jim, emphatically. "Yes—a good little girl, and it's a good deed to take her out of this den and give her a chance for a decent living." "That's so," responded Jim. "I say, 'Marquis,' you seem to be a turnin' all around; you ain't the kind of a chap wot would be picked up for a missionary." "I am changing, Jim," answered Catterton, slowly and gravely. "I am beginning to see the errors of my past life; but it's not too late for me to make a fresh start. All I need is a little money; and I know I can get that." "Vell, you're lucky. I wish I knew where I could get some," said Jim, in a melancholy tone. "I am in possession of a family secret concerning one of the Fifth Avenue tribe. To keep me still, they would probably pay me handsomely; but that I don't want, for I'm going to try and be upright in all my transactions hereafter—not that I have done anything very bad in the past. All I want is a loan to start me in the world; a loan that at some future time I will repay." "Hand you think you can get hit?" "Yes, the party has been absent in Europe for some years, but I saw a notice in the paper this morning of a grand party up-town, the other evening, and this person's name was mentioned among the guests." "The cow that you're goin' to milk green-backs from?" "No, not exactly that. Say rather the bank that is going to lend me money," replied Catterton. "There's no doubt about your gettin' it, I s'pose?" said Jim. "Oh, yes, there is—a great deal of doubt. For unless a certain person is alive, and in this party's care, my secret isn't worth anything." "Then you ain't certain?" "No. Sixteen years ago I was thrown off the scent, and I haven't recovered it yet."

"Vell, I wishes you luck." At that instant the street-sweeper returned with the intelligence that the way was clear. Carefully the "Marquis" and Jim descended the narrow, broken stairs, the street-sweeper leading the way. The party gained the street unobserved. "Good-by," said the "Marquis" taking the little hand of the girl in his. "Good-by," she repeated. "Remember to-morrow." "Am I likely to forget?" said Iola, and sooner would she have forgotten life than forgotten that appointment. "Good-by, God bless you!" cried Catterton, with a warm pressure of the hand, and then he hastened off, while Iola stood like a statue, and with straining eyes gazed after him. It was a strange expression to come from the lips of the "Marquis." From the lips of the man who never in his life had entered church or knelt at prayer. From that night the past of Daniel Catterton was blotted out; a new life opened before him—a life that would be a life of toil, but sweetened by the bread of honest labor. In this world the man who tries to elevate his fellow-beings elevates himself. It is impossible to do good without being the better for it. The "Marquis," the tool of the card-sharps, who if not really a knave himself, yet lent his talents to knavish service, by extending his hand to lift up the poor street-sweeper from the mire of degradation, also lifted himself into honesty.

CHAPTER XII.

THE FORBIDDEN LOVE.

In his cosy room sat Oswald Tremaine. Oswald was evidently in deep thought; he was gazing listlessly out of the window, but it was plain that he was not interested in the view before him. "I wonder if she loves anybody?" suddenly cried the young man aloud. As he was alone, of course there wasn't any one to answer the question. "By Jove, I've a good mind to ask her!" he again cried. It is sometimes a great relief to put our thoughts in words even if we have no listeners. "I suppose she's down-stairs now. I'll go and see." So Oswald descended the stairs. This was some three days after the one in which Mr. Whitehead had been received as secretary into the Tremaine mansion. In the parlor, looking carelessly out of the window upon the carriages rolling by—for it was a glorious April afternoon—sat Essie Troy. Essie was evidently reflecting, for she was tapping her fingers vacantly on the window-sill, and her eyes were not noticing the people passing in the street; many of whom cast glances of admiration at the fair-haired girl in the window. The door opening, disturbed her meditations. She looked up, and beheld the new secretary, Mr. Whitehead. "I beg pardon," he said, in his usual mild, hesitating way, "I thought Mr. Tremaine was here." "No, uncle went out an hour ago for a drive," said Essie. "Oh, well, it's of no consequence," and then the old man looked at the young girl in a strange manner. A puzzled look appeared upon his face. Essie wondered at the gaze. "I beg pardon, miss," said the old man; "but, some way, your face seems so familiar to me." "I do not remember to have ever seen you before," answered Essie.

"No, no," the old man murmured, confusedly, "but—Mr. Tremaine is your uncle, I believe?" "Yes," said the girl, astonished by the strange manner of the old man. "It's strange; your face seems so familiar to me," dreamily muttered the secretary; "and yet, can she have been in my past? No, no! She is too young. Don't wonder at me, miss. I—I sometimes have childish fancies. Your face seemed so familiar to me that I thought I had seen it before. I beg your pardon." And the old man bowed himself out. "Oh! if I could only remember!" sighed the old man, as he closed the door. "Her eyes and hair seem so familiar, and yet she could only have been a child, an infant, when my dead life was living. Oh! will the past ever come back to me?" Slowly the old man took his way up-stairs, passing Oswald, who was coming down. Oswald entered the parlor where Essie was sitting, wondering over the strange manner of the old man. Essie looked up at Oswald's entrance and the smile upon her face told that he was welcome. "Do you want company, Essie?" he asked, seating himself by her side. "Well, that depends upon whose company it is," answered the girl, archly. "How will you like mine?" Oswald asked, inwardly admiring the pretty girl before him, and what object in the world is prettier than a blooming, blushing girl of seventeen? One with the roses fresh in her cheeks, innocence in her heart and purity encircling her like a halo of light. "Stay here a little while and perhaps I will tell you, that is if you will be very good," she said, smilingly. "Essie, do you know that I think father made a great mistake in not letting you and I know each before this visit?" said Oswald, gravely. "Why so?" "Well, we might have been better acquainted—have liked each other ever so much better." Essie stole a shy glance at Oswald's face, and being caught in the movement blushed to her temples. "Why, Essie, what are you blushing for?" and Oswald took one of her little white hands in his. The hand did not resist, but remained motionless. Essie's eyes were cast upon the ground, shyly. "You don't answer my question?" "I can't tell," Essie murmured. "Essie," continued Oswald, taking advantage of the hand's capitulation and passing his arm gently around the waist of the unresisting girl—and few girls resist these proofs of love in the man—I am saying something to you now with my eyes; something that I wish to say with my tongue, but I find it's dreadful difficult. Can you guess what I am saying?" Essie stole a single shy look under her eyelashes, then demurely cast her eyes to the ground again. "Essie, you don't answer." "What do you want me to say?" she asked, softly. "Why, yes or no," he answered. "Oh! then it doesn't make any difference which I say then?" she said, with a faint smile. "Now, don't joke, Essie," said Oswald, just a little reproachfully. "Can't you guess what I'm trying to say to you with my eyes?" "I'm not good at guessing," said the girl, archly. "I see you wish me to speak then." "Why, of course. You wouldn't be good company if you didn't talk." Essie, with the natural coquetry of woman, was avoiding the subject. "Essie!" exclaimed Oswald, abruptly, "have you ever been in love?" "Why, what a strange question," answered Essie, stealing another shy glance at Oswald's earnest face. "Won't you answer it?" said Oswald, earnestly. "Why, how can I? Perhaps I do not really know whether I have ever loved any one or not." The answer was decidedly unsatisfactory to the anxious lover. "Have you ever told any one that you loved them?" "Oh, yes!" quickly exclaimed Essie. "Oh! so many people; my schoolmates, my teacher, your father, and—"

"We have known each other such a little while," she murmured, slowly.

"Long enough for me to learn to love you with my whole heart," he said, quickly. "Essie, I feel sure that I couldn't know you any better than I do now, if we were to be together ten years. I have never loved any girl in my life till I saw you. Essie, won't you love me a little?"

"But, Oswald, I am only a poor orphan dependent upon your father. I have no claim upon him, except that I am a distant relative; yet he has been like a parent to me. I have no relation in the world that I know of, but Mr. Tremaine. Ever since I was an infant he has taken care of me; and it is not very often in this world that rich people help their poor kindred. What would your father say then, if I allowed myself to fall in love with you? Would he like to have his only son marry a poor girl?" Essie spoke earnestly, looking into her lover's face with an expression of sadness upon her pretty features.

"My father is a sensible man," Oswald answered. "His wealth is not the sudden result of accident, but he was born to it. It has not turned his head as it does the heads of those that have fortune suddenly thrust upon them. He will not think one whit the worse of you because he knows that you are penniless. Essie, father loves you—he has proved that—loves you like a daughter. Do you not think that he will be willing to accept you from my hand as one? Do you not think that he will be glad to have me give him such a daughter?"

The fortress makes but a poor defense that has treachery within its citadel, and the heart does not require much persuading that is already prepared to yield.

Essie loved Oswald Tremaine—loved him with all the strength and deepness of a girl's first love—and to be his wife would be the crowning joy of her young life.

"Essie, can you love me—will you be my wife?" Oswald's voice was deep and earnest, as he put the momentous question, the answer of which would sway all his future life.

"Oswald, I—" and Essie's hand trembled in the warm grasp of the young man.

"Well—you do love me?"

"Yes," and Essie hid her face, shyly, on the breast of her lover.

Oswald's cup of happiness was full to overflowing. He looked with tenderness down upon the little golden head pillowed upon his breast. Carelessly he passed his hand over the fair curls.

"Essie, darling," he said, gently, "one little kiss." Slowly and shyly she raised her head. The lips of the lovers met in a long, lingering kiss. Then the door suddenly opened, and there, in the entrance, stood Loyal Tremaine, overwhelmed with astonishment and dismay.

CHAPTER XIII. FATHER AND SON.

LOYAL TREMAINE was thunderstruck at the discovery he had made; for the peculiar position in which he had discovered Oswald and Essie left no doubt whatever in his mind that the two were lovers. The very event that he had feared had occurred. He had only himself to blame for his own carelessness in bringing the two together.

Essie started up with a slight scream when she beheld Tremaine, while Oswald rose and faced his father calmly. He was not ashamed of his love for Essie Troy.

"Essie, my dear, will you leave the room for a few minutes? I have something to say to Oswald."

The tone of Tremaine was kind and gentle; there was not the least trace of harshness in it.

With cheeks covered with blushes, Essie hastened from the room, glad to escape to the solitude of her own apartment, and there reflect upon the events of the past hour—there to wonder if Oswald loved her as well as she loved him, and if her uncle would ever give his consent to her marriage with his son.

It is well that we can not read the future, sometimes; for if Essie Troy could have looked forward into her future, she would have seen a dark cloud hanging like a sable pall over her young life; she would have seen a gulf between her and her lover—a gulf so wide that even her pure and ardent love would fail to bridge it—a gulf as deep as the despair which was soon to come upon her young being.

Alas, Essie, enjoy the present, for the future for you is black indeed!

Tremaine, after Essie's flight, entered the parlor and closed the door carefully behind him.

Oswald noticed that his father's face showed no signs of anger, it was pale—quite pale, and a sorrowful look was upon it.

Tremaine paced up and down the parlor for a few minutes, as if in deep thought. Oswald waited for his father to speak, with impatience.

At last Tremaine paused before his son. "Oswald," he said, and he spoke kindly, without a trace of anger in his voice, "what was the meaning of that position that I found you in with Miss Troy?"

"It can only have one meaning, father," answered Oswald, frankly.

"And that is?"

"I love Miss Troy."

Although he had expected the answer, yet Tremaine started as though he had been smitten with sudden pain.

"Oh, heaven!" he murmured to himself, "I feared this!"

Oswald gazed upon his father's emotion in astonishment. He could not understand why the confession of his love for Essie Troy should create this agitation in the breast of his parent.

"You love her, Oswald?" questioned Tremaine, as if unable to believe the evidence of his own senses.

"Yes, sir, I love her."

"Oh, no!" cried Tremaine, violently agitated, "it is impossible!"

Oswald stared, at these strange words. "No, sir, it is not impossible," he replied; "it is the truth."

"You forget—she is a penniless girl!" cried Tremaine.

Bad argument for the father to use. He had forgotten his own youth; he had forgotten that he had once loved a girl who was not only penniless but legally another's.

Poverty is a bad argument to hurl at the head of a young and anxious lover. "I love Essie for herself, father," replied Oswald. "I should not love her any better if she was worth a million; I should not love her less than I do now, if she were poorer than she is."

"Oswald, this is folly!" cried Tremaine, excitedly.

Another bad argument: the young do not like to be told that they are acting foolishly.

Oswald bit his lip, but replied not to his father's speech.

"Oswald, you will forget this girl?" and Tremaine looked pleadingly into his son's face.

"Father, I can not," quietly replied the young man.

"I tell you that she is no match for you!"

"Because she is poor?"

"Yes—yes," Tremaine answered, with some hesitation.

"Then I will make her a fit match by giving her some of my wealth!"

"Why, Oswald, you forget all you have in the world comes from me."

"No, father," replied Oswald, firmly, "my health, strength and brain are my own. I do not fear but that I can hold my own in the world. Heaven willing, I can support Essie with the work of my two hands. Father, I do not ask one single penny of your money; only give me your consent to my marriage, and I'll go out into the world with a light heart, and battle cheerfully for myself and mine."

Oswald's nature had the ring of the right metal, and Tremaine could not help feeling proud, as he looked upon the handsome face of his son, and listened to his respectful but manly words.

"Oswald, be warned. You know well enough that I have never grudged you any thing in this world. I have been any thing but a stern father, and now I ask you, in return, to give me one favor—mind, I do not demand it; I simply ask it."

Tremaine's voice was full of entreaty. "And that favor is?"

"That you will give up all thoughts of Essie Troy."

"Father," answered Oswald, "the favor you ask I can not give you. It is impossible."

"Impossible!"

"Yes; in the first place, I love Essie too well to resign her, and even if I could control my feelings and yield to your request, I am in honor bound not to do so."

"Bound! How?" asked Tremaine, in amazement.

"I have asked Essie to be my wife," Oswald answered.

"And she consented?" asked Tremaine, in agitation.

"Yes, sir."

"Oh, I had no idea that it had gone as far as this," murmured Tremaine, slowly, in an undertone. Oswald did not hear the words.

"So you see, father, it is impossible for me to retreat in honor, even if I wished to do so; which, father, I do not. I love Essie; she loves me; her own lips have told me so, and why should I resign my happiness?"

"There is a reason, my son."

"Tell me what it is," was Oswald's natural exclamation.

"I can not!" exclaimed Tremaine, excitedly.

"A reason that forbids my union with Essie?"

"Yes."

"Is it because she is poor?"

"No, no," said Tremaine, reluctantly. "What then is the reason?" asked Oswald in astonishment.

"I can not tell you," said Tremaine, slowly and sadly.

"Can not tell me?" exclaimed Oswald, still more astonished.

"No, I can not," repeated Tremaine, evidently in sorrow.

"Father, you are not deceiving me? There is a reason that forbids my marriage with Essie?"

"Yes."

"And you will not tell it to me?"

"Oswald, I have told you that I can not."

"And why not?" asked the son, perplexed at his father's strange words.

"That I can not tell you, either," replied Tremaine.

"Father, there is no earthly reason that forbids my union with Essie Troy!" cried Oswald, impatiently. "This is only some device to prevent me from wedding the girl to whom my whole heart is given. Father,

this is not worthy of you. I did not believe that you would use trickery with me in a matter in which my whole heart is bound up."

"Oswald," said Tremaine, slowly, "I again repeat that there is a reason that forbids your union with this girl—a reason that, if you knew it, would make you recoil from her in horror, and curse the minute when you first allowed this fatal love to enter your heart."

The tone of the father's voice, coupled with his strange words, struck a chill to the heart of the son—to that heart which was so full of love for Essie Troy.

"Father, you speak in riddles!" he cried. "Do you mean to say that there is a taint of shame upon Essie?"

"No, no; not upon her!" hastily cried Tremaine.

"Upon some one connected with her, then?"

"Yes, yes!" answered Tremaine, sadly. "What, then, is that to me?" demanded Oswald, throwing his head back proudly, as though to defy the world. "I marry Essie—I do not marry her guilty kindred, if guilty they be. When she takes my name she loses her own, and the man will have to be a bold one that dares to say a single word against the wife of Oswald Tremaine."

Loyal Tremaine gazed upon his son, who thus boldly threw down the gauntlet to the world, with a sad look, but one in which pride, too, was mingled, for the father was proud of his boy. He looked upon the face wherein was written scornful defiance, and thought how quickly that look would be turned to anguish and despair when he learned the fatal truth that he seemed so determined to hear.

But Loyal Tremaine determined to spare his son the pain of the awful disclosure if possible.

"Oswald, the secret concerning Essie touches you more nearly than any other person in this world. That is why I do not wish to speak it; the truth once known to you—if you really love this girl—will blast your life forever!"

Tremaine spoke firmly but kindly. "My life!" cried Oswald in amazement.

"Yes," answered the father, "and if Essie learns it, and she also truly loves you, it will render her forever miserable."

Oswald could hardly believe his hearing. What could this terrible secret be?

"Tell me, father, I implore you!" he exclaimed. "The truth can not affect me more than this suspense."

"No, no!" Tremaine cried, "you shall never hear it from my lips, if I can keep it from you. For the last time, Oswald, I implore you to give up all thoughts of this girl!"

"Father, I can not!" Oswald answered, firmly.

"You will not banish this fatal passion from your heart?"

"My word is pledged to Essie; she is my plighted bride, and I will not break my word."

"Oswald! Oswald!" cried Tremaine, his face plainly showing his agitation, "your marriage with Essie is impossible!"

"Impossible!" exclaimed the son, strangely impressed with his manner. "Why is it impossible?"

"That is what I will not tell you, if I can help it," replied Tremaine. "There is one chance to save you from this anguish, and that chance lies in Essie's hands."

"I do not understand!" cried Oswald.

"I will go to her; tell her that I object to this union, and ask her to give you back your promise."

"She will never do it, unless you force her to it!" said Oswald, warmly.

"I shall not use force—only entreaty," replied the father, sadly. "If she truly loves you—"

"I'll stake my life that she does!" cried Oswald.

"Then she will not give you up, and the terrible secret—the secret that wrings three hearts—must be told."

The voice of Tremaine trembled with emotion.

"You will only ask her, then, to give me up?"

"Yes."

"And if you find that she really loves me?"

"I shall be forced to utter words that will make you fly from her as though she were a snake coiled in your path—good, pure, innocent girl that she is."

And with these mysterious words, so terrible in their import, Loyal Tremaine left the apartment, while Oswald remained a prey to terrible fears—terrible, for the hidden danger is the one that chills the heart.

(Continued next week—commenced in No. 9.)

The Unwilling Wife.

BY CLARA AUGUSTA.

"SISTER HENRIETTA, please do not urge this matter further. Mr. Hazellhurst is positively disagreeable to me!"

"Nonsense, Isabel! Only a girl's foolish fancy! Pray, what more could you desire in a husband than you would find in Mr. Hazellhurst? He is rich, influential, respected in society above all others; and every one confesses that his claims to manly beauty are not small. You are fastidious to require more!"

"Perhaps so! but I do, nevertheless. I require what Mr. Hazellhurst can never give me; it is his right to receive that which I

can never bestow on him! Henrietta, it is an old-fashioned belief that only mutual love offers a secure foundation for the rendering up of vows important as those of marriage, and I have always been a convert to that doctrine!"

"Very true, my sister—but your heart is now smarting under a bereavement—a bereavement which bears a hidden blessing in its sting! You have been a long time affianced to George Sydney, and now, a light pecuniary misfortune has shown you the strength of his affection, and driven him from your side. You are not now prepared to think calmly and dispassionately of a future union with any man; and for some reason, it seems you have taken an unwarrantable dislike to Mr. Hazellhurst. I will not urge the subject further, but allow me to ask you to think well before you give your final decision."

"I have thought of it, Henrietta, and I have only to repeat that should I marry Mr. Hazellhurst, I should do him a great wrong—a wrong for which I am unwilling to take the responsibility upon my soul! Is there no other way to aid poor Charles?"

"Again—that question? Isabel, the strong common-sense, for which you have been so much commended, has evidently left you. Permit me to review, briefly, the occurrences of the last six months. Charles Granville, our brother, is left by his father without a fortune—dependent upon his own exertions for a livelihood. Kindly and generously he is admitted into the establishment of Hazellhurst & Co. as accountant. Unknown to his friends, he falls into bad company—temptation assails him—he is unable to resist—he loses large sums at the gaming-table—his honor becomes involved, and in an evil moment, forsaken by his good angel, he commits a forgery upon the name of his employers, intending to pay back the amount. His crime is discovered; his act of false dishonesty is known! You may be aware of the punishment which the law inflicts on the forger? They could give him up to justice—to disgrace—to a prison!—to eternal death! Mark the difference of intention. Instead of this, the senior partner of the firm our brother has injured, a man of fine personal appearance, superior education, and immense wealth, offers you his hand in marriage, thus making the sin of our brother his own family secret, and covering his disgrace beneath the shield of his own spotless honor! Consider this magnanimous proposal in another light. One year ago, you were betrothed to a young man of proud family—one whom you loved—one who, you thought, loved you in return. Two months after your betrothal—when the marriage-day was appointed, and the wedding-garments bespoken—our father died. An investigation of his business affairs proved his estate insolvent; his great wealth had been swept away in commercial speculations—his children find themselves reduced to penury. Your devoted lover becomes, as it were, a new being; his professed regard is changed—reduced—obliterated! He pleads to a prior attachment, and leaves you to decide his fate. Your decision, Isabel, was that of a true woman! Had you done otherwise I should have scorned you—I should have regretted that ever a sister was born to me! You dismissed him calmly, coldly, quietly, as unworthy further thought. For this I honor you. Prove yourself, then, not undeserving my extended respect. You may be Charles' salvation, or condemnation, as you choose. Think well before you resign your brother to everlasting reproach!"

The door closed behind the retreating form of Henrietta Raymond, and Isabel was alone. For a whole hour, measured by the Gothic time-piece upon the mantel, the poor girl remained with her head bowed upon her folded arms, and her eyes closed in meditation.

Then she arose, pushed back the heavy bands of hair from her forehead, advanced to the bell-cord, and rung. Shortly a servant appeared.

"James, ask Mrs. Raymond to come down."

But a little time elapsed ere Henrietta made her appearance.

"Well, Isabel?"

"Sister, I have decided. I will marry Mr. Hazellhurst!"

Isabel's face was ashy pale, but her voice was steady and composed. A flash of joyful satisfaction lit up the countenance of Mrs. Raymond, and she would have embraced her sister, but Isabel drew back with an impatient gesture.

"God bless you, Isabel! You have saved the honor of our family—perhaps the everlasting destruction of our brother, for the terrible ordeal of courts and prisons would have been too much for him! And now, shall I send the accepted lover to your presence?"

"Henrietta, did you mark well my form of expression? I said I would marry Mr. Hazellhurst; but, if I rightly recollect, no allusion was made to loving him! Spare me that mockery at least. I do not love the man; I shall make no treacherous professions of the tender feeling toward him; but if my life is spared, I will be to him the thing which he wishes—an ornament to his parlors, and the machine which is to keep his domestic affairs in 'running order.' Now, leave me, Henrietta, I wish to be alone."

The conversation of the sisters has revealed enough of the family history, without ex-

tended explanation. For the rest, Henrietta was the wife of a distinguished lawyer in the city of Portland; and Isabel Granville, since the death of her father, had found a home with Mrs. Raymond.

Both of the sisters were beautiful, although scarcely a resemblance existed between them. Henrietta was a light-haired, blue-eyed, rosy-lipped blonde, with a warm heart, an impulsive nature, and a broad stratum of common-sense underlying her whole character. She rarely advised, and then, never without a sure conviction of her correctness; and the reader has seen how much her influence was able to work upon the sterner nature of her sister.

Isabel Granville was a woman whom you would have singled out from a crowd; not so much for her beauty, as for the steady light of truth and earnestness which beamed from her eyes, and stamped every feature in her face. You felt, instinctively, that she could be trusted with the most secret thoughts of your heart without fear of betrayal; she would never deceive you, and all her actions were open to the eye of the world. For all this, her nature was strongly reticent; she made no confidants, although she won many to confide in her.

Her education was solid, rather than ornamental; but her musical powers were highly superior, and had been carefully cultivated. Her voice had a peculiar thrill of sweetness, and when once heard was never forgotten.

William Hazellhurst had met Isabel often in the refined circles in which he moved, and for the first time in his life, his heart was interested. He had for some time been the peculiar target for match-making mothers, and by them he had begun to be considered as invulnerable. He was twenty-nine years of age—five years established in his profession, the law; and as Mrs. Raymond had said, he was wealthy and influential, both in the legal and mercantile world, for he was the head of a large commercial firm.

Nothing daunted by the invariable coldness of Isabel, he had offered her his hand, and she had asked three days to consider the proposal.

When the time had expired, Mr. Hazellhurst came for her reply, and Isabel went down to the parlor with a calm brow, but with a struggle in her heart. The thought of her brother saved from public disgrace nerved her in her resolution, and she gave him her decision with cold composure.

To his passionate acknowledgments of pleasure, she vouchsafed no rejoinder, but when he had ceased speaking, she said:

"Mr. Hazellhurst, I shall make no effort to deceive you. I am unaccustomed to dissimulation, and moreover, I despise it. Therefore, I prefer to tell you the truth. You know of my former engagement—you are, also, advised of the rude manner in which that tie was sundered. I loved Mr. Sydney once; now I can regard him only with contemptuous indifference. But while ceasing to love him, it changes not my feeling toward others. Mr. Hazellhurst, I do not love you; I wish you to distinctly understand that I make no professions of this kind in the connection. I say this to you freely and frankly—I would deceive no person, for I have felt the sharp sting of misplaced confidence. If, knowing all, you still wish to make me your wife—my consent is given."

A flush of involuntary pain crossed the forehead of Mr. Hazellhurst; but directly, he replied:

"Miss Granville, I thank you for speaking the truth, even though the thought that it is the truth wounds me deeply. Loving or unloving, I will take you, trusting to time and the fidelity of a heart which has never owned other allegiance, to win at least your favor, if not your love."

"You will oblige me, sir, by not alluding to love. Our compact is to be marriage, if I rightly understand—and now, for the present, adieu. You will exercise your right of calling, whenever inclination prompts you. Good-morning, Mr. Hazellhurst."

She bowed, and passed from the room.

Time passed on, and the wedding-day was fixed. Mr. Hazellhurst's house in Le Roy Square was in readiness—he had long kept his own establishment—and he was anxious that its proper mistress should take possession. Isabel offered no objection to a speedy union; so long as it was inevitable, she cared not how soon it was over.

The ceremony was performed in church; and from the perfume of orange-flowers, and the soft, fluttering breaths of the bridal veil, Isabel awoke to find herself a wife—installed in a home of her own; the sole proprietress of a multitude of graceful apartments, fitted up in a style of almost oriental splendor. There were well-trained servants to obey her slightest bidding; a carriage and horses ever at her command; but her heart found no content amid all the elegancies of this princely establishment.

Fully, now, she realized the extent of the sacrifice she had made to preserve her brother's honor.

Mr. Hazellhurst was all that the most exacting woman could require. Polite, attentive, even tender; but his wife sighed softly to herself when she saw how utterly impossible it was for her to love him, in return for his kindness. She, scornful deception, received all his lover-like demonstrations with uniform coldness, and after a time, her indifference had its legitimate effect, and he ceased all passionate professions of attachment.

They entertained much company, and were much abroad in society; but nothing

could exceed the calm courtesy with which Mrs. Hazelhurst received the congratulations of her friends, and the gratified expressions of satisfaction with which Mrs. Raymond often annoyed her.

Every one was loud in their praise of the extreme beauty and grace of Mrs. Hazelhurst, and admirers clustered thickly about her, only to be repelled and astonished by the cool contempt with which she rebuked their silly flatteries.

By degrees, the quiet care which her husband took for every thing pertaining to her happiness, so wrought upon the noble nature of Isabel, that she began to feel a new and strange interest in the man she had wedded without love. This change came slowly, and almost imperceptibly, but it was a most delightful one; and often she caught herself wondering over the lightness of her heart, and the unusual buoyancy of her spirits.

She began to wait impatiently, at night, for her husband's return home; to feel inquietude if he failed to arrive punctually; to blush like a girl at the sound of his footsteps on the stairs. Still, her manner toward him remained unchanged, for, as yet, she was unable to interpret aright the new feelings which she entertained for him.

Returning home, at dusk, from a visit to one of the many poor families which she was in the habit of visiting to dispense her charities, her husband passed her in a carriage. She glanced up, and saw that by his side was a young and beautiful girl, dressed with exquisite taste and elegance. Her face was fresh, fair, and lovely—the blue eyes were raised to those of Mr. Hazelhurst, while his head was bent so low toward her, that the raven blackness of his hair mingled with the golden locks upon her forehead.

A sharp pang shot through Isabel's heart as she gazed. A year ago she could not have believed that any circumstance could have led her to feel such an agony for William Hazelhurst. Pale and trembling, she hastened home, and flung herself upon a sofa, to think—she said to herself—calmly over the matter. But her brain was in a whirl, she was powerless to control her thoughts, and she experienced a temporary sensation of relief when she was summoned to the parlor to entertain a gay company of visitors. Their lively small-talk helped her, for the time, to drive away the dull, dead conviction of what she had seen.

The following morning, after the breakfast things had been taken away, Mr. Hazelhurst said, holding the door in his hand:

"Urgent business calls me to New York for a few days, and as I shall go on by the noon train, I shall not, probably, have the pleasure of seeing you again before my departure. You will not be lonely during my absence—your friends will give you much of their society, and my loss will not be felt?"

He spoke as though he hoped that her answer might be a disclaimer of the sentiment he had uttered. But no; though she longed to say something different, her pride forbade her. She scorned to question him on the occurrence of yesterday—the honor of her husband should be above suspicion. She replied:

"Whenever business calls Mr. Hazelhurst away, it is the duty of his wife to submit."

Her strong emphasis on the word *business* gave the gentleman a start; he turned and looked searching into her face, but evidently failing to read its expression, he touched her hand lightly to his lips, bowed, and left the apartment.

The moment he had gone, Isabel was seized with a desire to follow him to the depot, and scarcely stopping to wrap herself in a large shawl, she went out. She was just in time to see a close carriage driven to the platform; her husband issued hurriedly from the gentlemen's room, and opening the carriage-door, assisted the lady of the golden hair to alight. He held her in his arms a moment, and as he put her down he kissed her pure forehead. Isabel was so very near that she distinctly heard the words he addressed to the strange lady.

"Helen, dearest, I so feared you would be too late! All is well—I would risk every thing for your sake! You are all, the only one, that is left to love me!"

Then he drew her into the waiting car—seated himself beside her—the bell rung—there was a rumble, as of distant thunder, and the cars vanished from Isabel's sight.

She went home, slowly and deliberately, as one in a somnambule sleep. Her senses were benumbed—her strong love of virtue and honor outraged; the man whom she had regarded as faultless in integrity had been unmasked—a picture of shame and sin! And this was her husband. The one whose name she bore, whose home she shared—ay, the one to whom her heart was beginning to cling with all the firm tenacity of her woman's nature. Now she knew that latterly she had loved William Hazelhurst—that for weeks his presence had been dearer to her than the adulation of the crowd, and the specious voice of soft-toned flattery.

The realization came too late. She felt herself disgraced by harboring one tender feeling toward one so degraded; and summing up all her resolution, she penned the following brief note:

"MR. HAZELHURST—Sir: Duty bids me to leave your house, and I obey her command implicitly, feeling how utterly impossible it would be for me to render respect to the man who deceitfully pleads business as an excuse for his absence with a paramour."

"Yours, etc., ISABEL GRANVILLE."

The wronged wife sealed this letter, and

laid it upon the dressing-table in her husband's chamber. Then she returned to her own room, and selecting the plainest dress her wardrobe contained, she put it on, and making a small bundle of some simple articles which she needed, she wrapped a shawl around her, and set out for the residence of her sister.

Henrietta and Mr. Raymond were out riding, the servant said, and Isabel went in to await their return.

Alas! woe and desolation were in store for that once happy home, and the grim feet of Death were drawing nigh to its threshold!

They came home—both of them—the husband and wife—but how? Mr. Raymond was beyond all earthly solicitude, and Henrietta bruised, bleeding, and dying! It was all briefly explained to the horrified Isabel in a few words.

The horse which Mr. Raymond had driven was a spirited animal, and just beyond the limits of the city he had been frightened by a kite; he had become unmanageable, upset the carriage, and flung its occupants violently against a curb-stone. Mr. Raymond was killed instantly, but Henrietta still lived; and thus they came home.

The physician who was called pronounced Henrietta's injuries fatal, but she lingered in great pain until sunrise the next morning. Her last words were addressed to Isabel, as the latter sat, speechless with grief, at her bedside.

"My sister, I am dying—going to join Harry—and for this I am thankful. I could not live apart from him! And, sister, now, with the sharpened vision of one nearing the confines of eternity, I see for you much happiness in this world! You have enjoyed but little—I know it well—but the future will atone for all! Remember, Isabel, your dying sister tells you that you will be happy!"

And holding the hands of her brother and sister, her spirit passed away.

Charles Granville, redeemed, perhaps, from a life of infamy by his sister's marriage with Mr. Hazelhurst, was inexpressibly shocked and indignant when informed of the suspicious conduct of that sister's husband. He cursed himself as the wretched cause of all her unhappiness, and over the coffin of Henrietta he made a solemn vow never to bring a pang of grief to the heart of Isabel by his own volition, so long as God should spare his life.

After what had passed, he would remain no longer in the service of Mr. Hazelhurst; he could not tolerate the presence of the man who had so foully disgraced his sister.

Immediately after the funeral of Mr. and Mrs. Raymond, young Granville accompanied Isabel to the distant village of Beechdel, where a sister of their mother resided, who would gladly give her niece a home so long as she might require it. Having seen his sister safely arrived there, Charles Granville went back to Portland to attend to the settlement of the affairs of his late brother-in-law, and afterward, to get employment in some dry-goods establishment as clerk.

When he had gone, Isabel, after the first few days, grew restless and uneasy; her mind dwelt continually on her husband, and other emotions than that of indignation stirred her nature toward him. She was angry with herself, when she realized that she felt grief at his conduct; she was vexed that, away from him, she lost the sweet sense of content which she had recently enjoyed.

Much to the scandal of her good Aunt Mary, Isabel proposed engaging in some active employment, which would not only occupy her mind, but assist in her support; and as she was admirably qualified for a music-teacher, she, ere long, decided to offer herself to the people of Beechdel in that capacity.

By a stroke of good fortune, she obtained the patronage of Mrs. Cheswill, of Cheswill Hall, the most aristocratic lady in the place, and directly, several other families, aping their leader, engaged Isabel as instructress for their children. So in a very short space of time she had a large class of pupils; and her method giving excellent satisfaction, she found herself able to earn sufficient for her comfortable subsistence without depending upon her aunt.

Cheswill Hall, whither Miss Granville (Isabel had dropped the name of Hazelhurst) went every day, was a miracle of taste and elegance. Old, gray, and massive was the main body of the building, but additions that had been made from time to time in a modern style of architecture, gave the place an air of lightness and comfort which gratified inexpressibly the eye of the beholder. Creeping vines climbed luxuriantly over the windows, and twined the white pillars of the wide piazzas, while the magnificent beeches, which grew spontaneously, threw a shade like twilight into all the apartments.

Glimpses of the blue, gliding Merrimac could be had at intervals between breaks in the line of foliage; and afar off the peaks of the dark mountains lifted up their heads to drink in the red light of sunset. There were great rocks, and green dells, and quiet "ingles," all around the broad domain of Cheswill, and the love of nature in Isabel's bosom was daily and hourly gratified by its loveliness.

At the Hall, Miss Granville was received not as an inferior, but as an equal, and her connection with this pleasant family seemed to bid fair to bring her content, if not happiness.

Eugenie Cheswill, a young lady about seventeen years of age, was her pupil, and to a younger sister, Alice, she gave lessons in penciling. Thus, she was much at the Hall, and often in the company of St. John Cheswill, the only son, and heir of Cheswill Hall.

St. John was about twenty-five, tall, finely formed, and handsome almost to a fault. He was impetuous, warm-hearted, and generous; and bestowed an admiration of the intensest kind upon Miss Granville.

He, of course, knew nothing of her previous history—nor did he care; he loved her, and was unaccustomed to look for any obstacle in the path of his wishes. The world might say just what it pleased; he had a right to choose whom he willed, and if he could win Isabel Granville for a wife, he would do it in the face of the English blood and nobility from which the Cheswills were descended!

His lover-like attentions were most distressing to Isabel, and she strove by every means in her power to show him how very disagreeable his untiring perseverance had become to her. But her coldness only increased his ardor, and at last he resolved to bring matters to a crisis. They were left alone for a little while, and improving the favorable opportunity, St. John flung himself at her feet, and besought her favor.

Isabel, shocked and distressed beyond measure, threw off the hand with which he clasped hers, and would have rushed from the room without a word, but he grasped her arm, and detained her.

"No, Miss Granville, you shall not go until my fate is decided! Speak, and tell me if I have loved in vain!"

"You have—you have, indeed!" she cried, passionately. "St. John Cheswill, let me go! I am the wife of another!"

She hurried from him, leaving him petrified by her words, and throwing on her bonnet and shawl, she quitted the house. Down the broad, sloping avenue she flew rather than walked—out of the great gate into the green, quiet lane, which led down to the village. Half-way down the lane, breathless with her flight, she paused a moment to collect herself, and sitting down on the green back of the alder-hung brook, she buried her face in her hands. The quick tread of an approaching horse disturbed her, and rising, she found herself face-to-face with her husband! He sprang from his horse, and laid his hand firmly, though gently, upon her shoulder, for she was hastening away.

"Nay, Isabel, Providence has cast you in my way, and you shall not go until we fully understand each other!"

"I understand enough, sir! Permit me to pass on!"

The old haughtiness came back to her face; she made an effort to escape, but his strong arm held her fast.

"Not until I clear my character of the black shadow which you see upon it; not until I prove to you that, though I may never possess your love, I am yet worthy of your respect! Isabel, the woman with whom you have associated me in crime, is my sister! You start, and look surprised; you were unaware that such a relationship was mine; allow me to relate to you a brief story."

Isabel bowed her head, with a strange feeling of wonder and curiosity, and he continued:

"Years ago, a young and fair woman saw the earth close over the coffin of her husband, and found herself and her little son alone in the world to fight the fierce battle of life. Her fortune was small, but with careful management it yielded her a comfortable maintenance; and for nine years she remained a widow. At the expiration of that time, she met and loved Grant Welburn, the only child of a proud and aristocratic family in Boston. Welburn was a noble-hearted fellow, and the young widow became very dear to him, first from her resemblance to a dear sister who had been dead for some years—afterward for herself. He felt that he could enjoy no happiness unshared by her; and very urgently he besought her to consent to a private union. His father was aged and feeble; a man of immense wealth and indomitable pride; he had set his heart on having his son become the husband of some woman of a family equal in social worth to his own, and his sanction could not be obtained to the marriage of Grant with the comparatively obscure widow. The eloquence of her lover won her over, for with true womanly unselfishness, she placed Grant's interest before her own—and the two were wedded privately at the residence of the aged clergyman of the village. The only witness to the ceremony was Colonel Wright, a naval officer, and a strong friend of the bridegroom. The fact of this marriage was to be kept secret until Grant had firmly established himself in business, for until then he could not afford to brave the anger of his father. Eighteen months flitted by in a dream of bliss to the two thus clandestinely mated; and then Mrs. Welburn became the mother of a daughter! Such an event could not be hidden from the eyes of the curious villagers, and the fair fame of the unacknowledged wife was blackened, and her name bandied about the streets. Grant Welburn could not bear this; and from New York, where he was located in business, he set forth for Boston—resolved to disclose all, and throw himself upon the mercy of his father. In this purpose, Death defeated him. In the great railroad collision which at that time smothered to many a home, Grant Welburn

met his end! The first terrible shock of his sudden death over, Mrs. Welburn thought of her child. Its innocence must be substantiated—its birth cleansed from stain! Alas! how was it to be done? Weak and feeble she arose from her bed of sickness, and set on foot measures to prove her marriage with the late Mr. Welburn. It was in vain. The minister who had married them, had lain for some months in the tomb, and the marriage-certificate had been given into the keeping of Colonel Wright, for safety. As ill-luck would have it, the ship to which Wright belonged had been ordered to India; and not a week before the birth of Mrs. Welburn's child, the foreign newspapers had contained notices of the death of Colonel Wright. Thus was she cut off from all chance of proving the legitimacy of her child. I will not weary you by relating the many fruitless pilgrimages which she made to her husband's family—I will not tell you of the bitter scorn with which they sent her away from their door—and at last, broken-hearted and despairing, she yielded up her life!"

Mr. Hazelhurst paused, and for several moments remained with his face buried in his hands. Presently he continued:

"Her boy, then fifteen years of age, was kindly adopted by a gentleman of benevolence, as well as wealth, residing in a neighboring city, and through his patron's kindness, he was educated for the bar. The girl, Helen, then five years old, was placed by the same good man with a respectable family in a western village, to board. Her birth, and its attendant circumstances, were a secret to her protectors, and, untampered by her playmates, Helen Welburn grew up to womanhood, lovely in mind and person. Her brother regarded her with pride and affection—ay, with love—tender and true as that which a lover gives to his mistress. His sister was a part of himself, and he only prayed to live until he could see her acknowledged by her father's kindness, and placed in that sphere of life to which she rightfully belonged. He brooded much upon this subject, and people called him cold and self-absorbed, when he was only grieving because of his mother's wrongs. At the age of twenty-nine, he loved, for the first time. This new passion intensified his whole life, and changed him into a new being. But the girl upon whom he lavished all this heart-wealth, was simply indifferent to him—she loved no other—but she loved not him. Her friends urged her to marry him; she frankly told him her sentiments, leaving him at liberty to risk all, and take her, or endure the deeper wretchedness of going away from her presence forever! He grasped at this frail hope of happiness, and made her his wife! Immediately after his marriage, he wrote to his sister and told her the story of his love. His wife, he said, was proud, but she had a noble nature, and she would not cast Helen out from her heart because the false world deemed her the offspring of shame. But Helen said differently. If the bride loved not the brother, she would despise the sister—and with her arms about her brother's neck, and her tears on his cheek, made him promise never to reveal the fact of her existence to his wife, until it could be made clear to the eyes of all men that her mother was lawfully married to Grant Welburn. She felt that some time, in some manner, this would be; and until then she could wait for a sister's love! Subsequent events proved Helen correct in her presentiment. Colonel Wright had not died, as the papers had stated—he had only been very ill, and immediately after his recovery, his regiment having been ordered to a distant frontier, he had found no time to contradict the rumor. Accidentally, Helen's brother met this Colonel Wright in New York, soon after the return of the latter to the United States, and by a strange interposition of Providence, they became mutually acquainted. Of course, the wrong was righted—the marriage-certificate of Mr. and Mrs. Welburn was produced—and the name of Juliette Welburn was as fair in the eyes of the world as the light of heaven! Isabel, the lady who accompanied me to New York, was Helen Welburn; and William Hazelhurst, the son of the widow, stands before you! It was to bring my sister to her father's relatives that I visited New York, for she would not consent to see you until she was duly acknowledged as Grant Welburn's daughter. That has taken place. Her aged grandmother, long repentant for the part she had played toward her son's wife, received Helen with open arms, and to-day my sister is the lawful heiress of a great fortune! Mr. Cheswill is a distant relative of our family, and having, by dint of much inquiry, learned that you had come to Beechdel, I had thought, perhaps, to learn of him, something concerning your whereabouts. I wished to clear myself in your eyes, Isabel; for if I am nothing to you, I could not bear that you should think me guilty of such a crime against you! If I have sinned in keeping all this a secret, forgive me!"

Isabel laid both her hands in his. A strange, sweet happiness filled her soul.

"God be thanked, William!" she said, fervently. "God be thanked!"

Mr. Hazelhurst started, and a deep flush of crimson swept over his brow. He looked searching into her face as he spoke:

"What means it, Isabel? Why did you call me William? Why did you thank God that I am not what I seemed?"

The tones of her reply were low and broken, but he heard her.

"Because, at last, I have loved you!"

Still he seemed to doubt, and again his dark, earnest eyes searched her face.

"Isabel, you would not deceive me? Tell me, if at last, my love, so long wasted, has met with a response?"

He opened his arms, and she went to them, gladly and trustfully as a child goes to the breast of its mother.

In that hour all was understood, and the prophecy of Henrietta was fulfilled.

But little more remains to be told. Resting their happiness upon the secure basis of mutual love, William Hazelhurst and his wife pass through life secure in their sweet home-nest—little caring for the days of darkness through which they arrived at their great joy.

St. John Cheswill, cured of his *mal apropos* passion for Mrs. Hazelhurst, married the beautiful sister of that lady's husband—Helen Welburn; and Charles Granville has been for some years the liege lord of fair Eugenie Cheswill.

So, dear reader, our story ends happily after all.

Hints and Helps.

The Wedding-ring Finger.—This is the fourth finger on the left hand. Why this particular digit should have received such a token of honor and trust beyond all its congeners, both in pagan and Christian times, has been variously interpreted. The most common explanation is, according to Sir Thomas Browne, "presuming therein that a particular vessel, nerve, vein, or artery, is conferred thereto from the heart," which direct vascular communication Browne shows to be anatomically incorrect. Macrobius gives another which may perhaps satisfy those anatomists who are not satisfied with the above. "Pollex," he says, "or thumb, (whose office and general usefulness are sufficiently indicated from its Latin derivative *pollex*, and from its Greek equivalent *antichier*, which means 'as good as a hand') is too busy to be set apart for any such special employment; the next finger to the thumb, being but half protected on that side, besides having other work to do, is also ineligible; the opprobrium attaching to the middle fingers, called *medicus*, puts it entirely out of the question; as the little finger stands exposed, and is moreover too puny to enter the lists in such a contest, the spousal honors devolve naturally on *promissus*, the wedding-finger." In the *British Apollo*, 1788, it is urged that the fourth finger was chosen from its being not only less used than either of the rest, but more capable of preserving a ring from bruises; having this one quality peculiar to itself, that it can not be extended but in company with some other finger, whereas the rest may be stretched out to their full length and straightness.

Crystal Baskets.—These little articles make very pretty ornaments, and are not difficult to manufacture, besides costing but a trifle. The basket is first fashioned with copper wire, as a skeleton of the pattern desired. For blue crystals, a saturated solution of sulphate of copper in hot water; place the pattern or skeleton in this liquor, and set it in a quiet place, as the solution cools, crystals of the sulphate will be deposited on the wire. The first crystals will be small, but to increase their size it is only necessary to place the ornaments in a fresh and perfectly saturated solution of the copper salt. For yellow crystals, use the yellow prussiate of potash. For ruby, use the red prussiate of potash. For white, use alum or acetate of lead. The salts of chromium, and many others, are equally applicable for this purpose, if greater variety of color be wanted. To preserve these ornaments in all their beauty they should be kept under glass shades. All the salts named are more soluble in hot than in cold water; hence, as the hot solutions become cold, a part of the material is deposited; in so doing, each metallic salt assumes a particular shape of crystal, as though endowed with vitality.

How to Rise Refreshed.—Every person who toils daily at any kind of labor requiring great physical or mental exertion, should be extremely careful to practice a regular system of ablation at the close of each day's work. Sometimes a person may become so completely exhausted as to render this any thing but an inviting performance; yet by its omission a great deal of refreshment, which the hours of repose are designed to impart, is lost. To be cleanly is a strictly religious duty, and is absolutely essential to sound and refreshing slumber; hence the labor of keeping one's person clean is amply repaid by the elasticity which follows nightly ablutions before retiring. Heed this advice, and the reader will sleep soundly; disregard it, go to bed unwashed, and you will rise in the morning unrefreshed, with feelings of lassitude, which the exertions of the day will hardly be able to remove.

Advice to Young Ladies.—Be cheerful, but not gigglers. Be serious, but not dull. Be communicative, but not forward. Be kind, but beware of silly, thoughtless speeches; although you may forget them, others will not. Beware of levity and familiarity with young men; a modest reserve, without affectation, is the only safe path. Court and encourage serious conversation with those who are serious and conversible; and do not go into valuable company without endeavoring to improve by the intercourse permitted you. Nothing is more unbecoming, when one part of a company is engaged in profitable and interesting conversation, than that another part should be trifling and talking comparative nonsense to each other.

Novel Mode of Tying Horses.—The Icelanders have a curious custom, and a most effectual one, of preventing horses from straying. Two gentlemen, for instance, are riding together, without attendants, and wishing to alight for the purpose of visiting some objects at a distance from the road, they tie the tail of one horse to the head of another, and the head of this to the tail of the former. In this state it is utterly impossible that they can move either backward or forward, one pulling one way and the other the reverse; and, therefore, if disposed to move at all, it will only be in a circle, and even then, there must be an agreement to turn their heads in the same direction.

"Let's get out of this, Bob," said the detective, with a half-shudder, as he looked around the little room that had so nearly proven his grave.

"Jest so, boss," ejaculated Bob; "taint a lively crib here. It's 'bout as cheerful as a grave-yard."

"I must think of some way to pay you for this night's work," said Burt.

"Let 'er slide!" responded Bob, with a grin. "Say, cap, I heard all 'bout the kid you want to find. Did that cove talk square?"

"Yes," replied the detective, wondering at the question.

"Oh! Hail Columbia!" and the bootblack executed a war-dance around the detective, much to that gentleman's astonishment.

"What the deuce is the matter with you?" Burt asked.

"Why, I've found my old man!" Bob cried, breathlessly. "I'm the kid that was brought up by Deborah Gwin—Aunt Debby, from ole Virginia; that's so, boss," and Bob indulged in another war-dance.

It was indeed the truth: Bob, the bootblack, was the child of the sailor, Richard Gorman.

Washed and dressed in clean clothes, his likeness to his father was great enough to convince any one that he was indeed the long-lost child.

Jim Tighe, the escaped burglar, was somewhat astonished by being "interviewed" by detective Burt, some four and twenty hours after he had left that officer to be eaten up by the rats in the old rookery in Mulberry street. The result of that interview was, that the redoubtable Jim was sent back to Sing Sing to serve out his ten years.

And as for the hero of our sketch, a few months' schooling has done wonders, and few would recognize in Richard Gorman, Junior, the imp-like lad who was once known as Bob, the bootblack.

The Shadowed Heart:

OR,

THE ILL-STARRED MARRIAGE.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

AUTHOR OF "KID MARK," "SCARLET CRESCENT," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER I.

THE RETROTHED.

THE Grange was now one blaze of welcoming light, and the occupants were adorning the rooms with all the taste of which they were possessed.

Down-stairs, every imaginable preparation for a sumptuous feast was going rapidly on, superintended by the skillful cook, from whose domains the savory scents would occasionally reach the apartments above, where were waiting the family.

The family at the Grange were very aristocratic, very wealthy, and exclusive—so much so, that the honor of being placed on Mrs. Doctor Elverton's visiting-list was greatly coveted in the vicinity by aspiring neighbors.

The household at the Grange was not large, consisting of the handsome, dignified husband and father, Doctor Le Roy Elverton, a retired physician of great skill and world-wide reputation, his elegant lady-wife, and their only child, Maude.

Maude Elverton was but a trifle over eighteen, and charmingly lovely. Of a family noted for their personal beauty on her mother's side, and descended from the famous Elvertons on the other, she inherited graces of mind and of person, that, aided by the liberal education she had received, fitted her to shine "a bright, particular star" in any society.

Her gentle, unaffected, and withal dignified mien, no less than the sweet face, the sloping shoulders, the round, faultless arm, with its tiny white hand and slender, tapering fingers; her little naked foot, peeping now and then from the coquettish walking skirts; all these had made many impressions on the gentlemen she had met from time to time.

Impressions that were of no avail, however, much as Maude Elverton was admired; for of all the scores who, in the brief twelve months she had been in society, had waited on the doctor to obtain permission to offer their addresses to his beautiful child, the same reply invariably came:

"Miss Elverton's future husband is already selected."

To a person she had never seen, but of whom report spoke proudly and favorably, to George Casselmaine, her own cousin, and heir to a large fortune, and natural inheritor of personal beauty and intellectual strength, Maude Elverton was to be married. From her childhood days, since she could remember her parents' consultations together, Maude had learned to regard the unknown cousin as her future husband. He, in his turn, had ever considered the lovely girl, whose picture her mother had sent him, his wife.

Mutually satisfied with this state of affairs, and liking each other at a distance, the intervening years of their childhood had passed, until now the time had come when they were to meet.

This was what the family at the Grange were waiting for that cool autumn afternoon. Waiting for George Casselmaine.

Maude and her mother were alone in the dressing-room of the former, who had finished her toilette, and sat by the window, glancing carelessly down the road.

"How does he look, mamma? Is he really as handsome as his picture, or was the artist flattering? I am wild with curiosity to see him."

Maude's eyes turned inquiringly to her mother.

"George Casselmaine is just what you see he is in his picture. Add to that his grace, refinement and elegant ease of manner."

"Perhaps I will not meet his expectations, mamma, if he is so perfect."

Maude laughed as she spoke, even while a proudly self-conscious look of her charms shone in her dark-blue eyes.

Mrs. Elverton looked quickly up, a haughty smile curving her lips.

"Not be satisfied with you? Child, a prince might be delighted to wed you."

Her maternal pride was her greatest passion, and Maude, whose head was not turned in the least by her fond flatteries, loved the parent for the delight she felt in the daughter.

"No, indeed," resumed Mrs. Elverton. "George Casselmaine will find all he desires, all he expects in you, my darling. And I can assure you that in him you will perceive every thing to admire, to please you."

"And to love, dearest mamma?"

Maude asked the question in a peculiarly pointed tone of voice.

Her mother raised her eyebrows in amazement.

"My child! how could you *help* but love him, when I give you such a glowing description? Love him, Maude? Any woman would do that; they could not avoid it."

"You are an enthusiast on the subject of your future son-in-law, dearest mamma. Perhaps others judge less partially."

"Well, you must be your own judge of that, my child. In a very short time you will see him—"

Mrs. Elverton was interrupted by her daughter's voice, who, with flushed cheeks, was gazing eagerly from the window.

"Is it he?" she asked, quickly following Maude's look.

A noble-looking young man was passing the great gate, and as Maude bowed, he returned the salute.

"No, mamma; it is only an acquaintance."

Her words were lightly spoken, but the blush on her face, and the fire in her eyes, were not unnoticed by Mrs. Elverton.

"Maude, Maude, why does the sight of Fred Trevlyn bring that color to your cheeks?"

Almost sternly she asked the question.

The tint only deepened as Maude replied: "Was I blushing, mamma? That was very foolish."

Mrs. Elverton brought her chair close to her daughter.

"Can it be possible, Maude Elverton, that you were thinking of him, of *any* one, when you asked me if there was any thing to love in George Casselmaine?"

Maude turned guiltily away.

"I did not think this of you; your father and I thought when your cousin came, it would be to welcome him with an undivided heart, and yet you blush when the owner of the Archery passes your window. Oh, Maude!"

Her tones were both reproving and vindictive.

"You accuse me of that which is false, mamma. I know of no reason why I should betray emotion at sight of Fred Trevlyn, and I certainly shall meet my cousin with as whole a heart as he brings to me. I only know one truth, and that is, that Mr. Trevlyn seems adapted to love, and I wondered if George was equally so."

"Oh!" and Mrs. Elverton uttered a faint

"For years I have dreamed of this meeting, and now the realization far exceeds my wildest anticipations. My sweet cousin, we are already the best friends imaginable, are we not?"

"Most certainly!"

The earliest greetings were over—that which Maude had so dreaded—and, accepting his arm, she and George Casselmaine walked away, like old-time friends, conversing pleasantly.

I hardly dared hope you would desire to keep to me the promise your father made mine when we were children," he said, in his low, musical tones as they promenaded slowly up and down the wide marble-floored halls.

"Now that I have seen you, Maude, I almost tremble when I think how miraculous it is that such beauty has been reserved for me. Strange, that no one has robbed me of the jewel I was in such ignorance of, until this hour."

Maude laughed merrily.

"Oh, sir, like all men, you seek to please by adulation, and perhaps you can more satisfactorily account for my condition to-day from the fact that I care very little for gentlemen's society."

He colored slightly at her well-pointed allusion.

"Let me hope your opinion may be altered before long, concerning me at least. And to impress the fact on your mind that I shall constantly and steadfastly aim to attain to that standard which is highest in your opinion, my dear cousin, may I place this on your finger—the talisman that shall protect while it strengthens, and recall thoughts of me while it whispers how dearly I love you?"

He held a shining circlet toward her as he spoke.

"It is no fetter, dear Maude, only a charm. Will you wear it for my sake?"

She blushed, smiled, and then extended her hand, while George Casselmaine slipped on the ring.

He led her to her parents.

"My betrothed wife, Doctor Elverton, dear madam."

Her father laid his hand on her prone little head in speechless blessing, while Mrs. Elverton glanced proudly at the handsome couple before her.

"Poor Fred Trevlyn!" she thought. "I wonder if Maude did insure him? Well, there is an end of it now."



HE HAD SEEN THE HANDSOME STRANGER PLACING A RING ON HIS IDOL'S FINGER.

CHAPTER II.

THE MYSTERY AT THE "ARCHERY."

scream, "how should you know enough of

Mr. Trevlyn to know he seems of a 'loving'

temperament?"

Again the hot flush rose to Maude's white forehead, but she did not choose to tell her mother of the earnest glances of the dark, handsome eyes that often had met her own in a grave, serious way that had made her heart beat wildly, or the delicate, tender attentions he had offered her on the two occasions they had met. Maude did not tell this to her mother, for her heart would not let her. Suddenly she turned to Mrs. Elverton.

"Mamma, this is exceedingly foolish in both of us. In me, for acting so childishly at mere sight of a comparative stranger; and in you, dear mamma, for accusing me of the improbable fault of being traitress to you and papa, and—George Casselmaine."

she added, with a genuine embarrassment that effectually removed her mother's suspicions.

"I am only too glad I was wrong, my darling, and now—There, there, Maude, comes your lover!"

A hasty glance rewarded her with a moment's glimpse of a tall, handsomely-dressed gentleman, whom her father was welcoming at the door. His face she had not seen, but his voice, as the tones were wafted up the stairs, were full, round and musical.

Her heart beat as she stepped from her room and for a moment a wild throb of shame filled her heart, as she thought how utterly her own tastes and judgment were ignored—how complete a tool she was in her parents' hands. George Casselmaine would hate her, she thought, for her unmaidenliness, and as if by mere force of contrast, she reflected that Fred Trevlyn would never have degraded her so. But, then, George Casselmaine was as much involved as herself in this arrangement, and if he had traveled from Germany to see her, she thought she could go down-stairs in her own father's house to meet him.

Again her own cool, dignified self, she accepted her father's arm at the foot of the broad, elegant staircase.

Proudly Doctor Elverton led her in.

"This is our daughter, our Maude, your Maude, dear George. My darling, let me introduce your cousin, George Casselmaine, and our future son, we hope."

Maude blushed prettily, and extended her hand in cordial welcome.

The gentleman clasped it warmly.

His had been a strange life—one of deepest shades and brightest tints. He had lived on the mountain-top of joy, hope and comfort; he had dwelt in the valley of disappointment, grief and discontent.

To-day, as he entered his splendid home, he strode straight to his private room, whose shutters were always darkly bowed, and the door ever locked.

Into this room he went now, and, as was his custom, fastened the door after him, then threw himself on a somber brown lounge that stood between the windows.

"Wretch! worse than brute that I am! and yet for the life of me I am powerless when I see her—tremble like a guilty school-boy if I do but hear her name mentioned."

He covered his eyes with his hands a moment in silence; then his pent-up grief burst forth:

"Why, *why* am I doomed to lead such a life? Why can I not love whom I please, and throw this fearful shadow from my side, where, for these dark years, it has clung in such persevering gloom? Oh, fool that I was—twice fool that I am, to live and suffer—to live yet die daily!"

His face was ashen pale, and as he arose he dashed from his forehead the great drops of perspiration.

"And I love her—oh, how I love her! with a depth, a force, an intensity that is burning my heart to cinders. Yet I dare not speak, dare not go, like other more favored men, and plead my suit; I must only smother my love for her, and suffer and live on and on in dreary longings worse than Tantalus ever experienced. Oh, my darling, my darling, if I could but call you mine! my angel, my Maude!"

His self-communion had reached an intensity that startled himself, and as the name of his idol was wrung, in anguished tones, from his pale lips, he started, and stood a moment motionless, his hand clenched upon the marble-top stand beside the lounge. Gradually his emotion died away, and then, with bright, glittering eyes, he stepped within a heavy hanging curtained recess, whose folds opened to receive him, then instantly fell tightly together again.

No sound issued from the veiled apartment, and when, ten minutes later, Fred Trevlyn came forth, his brow was calm and clear, his eyes quiet and dispossessed of the raging fire that burned in their dark depths so lately before; he came forth a subdued

man, and left the room for his chamber above.

This inner room was the one sacred spot of the Archery; mortal eye, save his own, had never penetrated its hidden mysteries, and if the faint delicious perfumes that occasionally were wafted from this inner apartment were noticed by the servants, they did not dream of its origin.

This afternoon he went to his dressing-room, where the servant met him with a letter.

It was a small white envelope, addressed in a beautifully graceful hand, and his own name was the superscription.

He frowned darkly, and rapid flashes of ominous light gleamed in his eyes as he dismissed the man, and tore open the letter.

As he read, his lip curled scornfully, and a bitter smile played over his face; then a sudden paling swept over his countenance, and he sank back to his chair, while the strange letter lay unheeded on the rich carpeting at his feet.

For several moments he seemed absorbed in thought, then apparently just remembered the missive, for he caught it up quickly, glancing anxiously to the door, as if fearful some one had witnessed his agitation.

Straight through to the end he read, without pause or hesitancy, and then, lighting a match, burned it to ashes, scattering them far and near on the floor.

His writing-desk was open, and he hastily scribbled a note, and without re-reading it, dashed it into an envelope, and directed it.

Calling his groom to bring his favorite Fleet to the door, he drew on his riding-boots, and thrust the letter into his pocket.

An hour's gallop, by a back road, brought the missive in time for the mail.

Despite his better judgment, he resolved on once more passing the Grange. Semidarkness was fast veiling the landscape, and no one would observe him, while he might once more gaze on the sweet face of the girl he so loved.

With beating heart he drew the reins, and permitted Fleet to walk slowly by.

The curtains were yet up, and by the brilliant illumination within he plainly saw the bright, gorgeous carpet, the elegant furniture and costly paintings. But these were everyday things, no new sights to him, for the Archery was equally splendid. His gaze was riveted upon a group, directly under the glare of the chandelier, and when his mind fully appreciated the truthful import of

the tableau, a cold, dead weight settled on him, and he went dreamily along.

He had seen the handsome stranger placing a ring on his idol's finger; he had seen Maude's bright smile, and witnessed the mute blessing of the proud father.

"Oh, my darling, it is right! I can not complain! I have no right to love you, and you—you are nothing for me!"

To his lonely home he went, a sorrowful man, with no kind voice to bid him welcome, no merry face to brighten at sound of his footstep.

With a bitter, half-savage smile, he entered the room, and locked it after him.

CHAPTER III.

A TRUE WOMAN.

It was a charming little cottage, little less than a mile away from the Grange, and covered with creeping roses from chimney to base. Roses of white, creamy and blushing pink hue bloomed in wild abundance, and rendered the fragrant spot a fit home for the blossom who presided over the small household of three, with all the dignity and grace of a matron of thirty-five.

Little Ida Tressel, with her sleeves rolled to the elbows, as she prepared the flaky pastry that was to tempt her father's waning appetite, was every inch a Hebe as she stood so gracefully poised on one dainty foot, holding aloft the pie-plate in one small brown hand, while with the other she dexterously cut the over-large edges of the brimming pumpkin-pie.

Her cheeks were glowing with health, and her eyes fairly scintillating in her exuberance of spirits, and her father, as he watched her, thought what a darling she was, and Aunt Hetty, the sable housemaid, followed her little nimble figure from oven to dough-trough in pardonable pride.

"There," she said at length, "I believe I'm through. Now for Hetty's nimble hands to clear my litter away. I love to bake, but oh, don't I detest the dish-washing that follows!"

Her happy laugh echoed through the large old-fashioned kitchen.

There were two custards, your favorites, father, you know, and two pumpkins, the first we've had this fall. They look splendid, don't they? We ought to save them for company, only we're never troubled with that nuisance." Mr. Tressel, who was confined in-doors by his rheumatism, fidgeted uneasily in his chair. At last he found courage to speak, though rather reluctantly.

"Maybe you'd better save them for tomorrow, for we'll have a neighbor in to dinner."

"Who, pray?" and Ida nearly fell from the apron she was untying. "Company for us? Why, who can it be?"

Her father looked out the door, then at the pies.

"Nobody much, child. Only old Andrew Joyce. You needn't go to any trouble."

"I guess I'll not! Old Joyce? Why, father, he is almost a fool! What made you invite him here?"

She bent an inquiring look at the old man, who seemed strangely ill at ease.

"You mustn't call him 'old Joyce,' Ida. He's a very rich man, and 's got a splendid house full of splendid things."

"Just as if that is any recommendation to him! No, indeed, father! He is a disgusting old man, say what you will. Why, he is as old as you."

"No. He is not sixty yet, and that's pretty young—pretty young."

A merry peal of laughter ripped from Ida's red lips.

"Oh, father, Mr. Joyce is evidently trying to befriend you, or wanting you to accommodate him, else why these new and sudden views of 'old Andy,' as the boys call him?"

Her father looked up in her laughing face, and a sigh burst from his lips.

"Andrew Joyce is a good, honest man, Ida, and I believe would do well by anybody, particularly you."

"Me!" screamed Ida, involuntarily springing from her seat. "What under the heavens can Andrew Joyce want of me? Tell me, father, for I know there is something between you two."

Mr. Tressel leaned back in his chair, both hands grasping the rustic oaken cane he always carried.

For a moment he did not speak, and Ida bent tenderly over him.

"Dear father, if Mr. Joyce asked you to let me superintend his elegant house while the fashionable company from New York is there this season, you need not hesitate to tell me. It will not shock my pride, father," she said, in her sweet way; then, adding, "and, I am not quite sure but that I would enjoy a visit to the Villa, more than you think I should."

"Would you?" and old Mr. Tressel glanced eagerly up at her. "Would you *really* like to go to the Villa to live?"

"I could earn money, father, or let Mr. Joyce allow my wages to go toward the debt on our dear home," said Ida, softly, as she smoothed the scanty gray locks.

"Then you love this little spot, child, better than any other, even the elegant marble Villa, with the fountains and arbors, and the velvet furniture and costly silver?"

"Father!" and Ida's voice was a trifle reproving. "Didn't mother die in Rose Cottage? didn't little Albert die here? shall not you and I and faithful old Hetty live and die here?"

There were tears in the old man's eyes as she spoke, and he dashed them hastily away. "Ida," he said, after a moment, his voice husky yet firm, "Ida, have you a lover?"

A burning crimson torrent flooded her fair face, neck and arms, but her answer, so prompt and unhesitating, seemed strangely at variance.

"No, indeed, I have no lover! You know that, father."

Her clear, truthful eyes were raised to his face, and yet in their far-away depths, old Mr. Tressel fancied he detected other signs.

"You a maiden of twenty, and never yet loved?"

Again the vivid blush, deeper than before, spoke more plainly than words.

This time she made no reply, and her father smiled sorrowfully upon her averted face.

"Then my daughter *does* love, yet has no lover. That is strange."

A sudden gush of tears from her eyes was her assent to her father's remark.

"Who is this man you can not tell me of?"

"You must not ask me, father; please do not."

With strangely new eagerness, Mr. Tressel insisted on her informing him.

"You are doing very wrong, my daughter, in holding back the name of the one in whom you are so deeply interested. Besides, I have a right to demand his name and position."

will tell you, if you will willingly give me your confidence on this subject, of an offer I have received for you."

Ida's face had colored deeper and deeper, but at mention of an offer of marriage, suddenly paled.

"No one need ask my hand of you," she replied, proudly, "for never will I give it without my heart; and that is bestowed, irrevocably, as you have rightly inferred."

"Who is it, my daughter? I shall not ask you again."

Mr. Tressel looked almost sternly upon Ida's bowed head.

For a moment or so he waited, but no answer came. Then he resumed:

"Whoever it may be, you love is hopeless, for, Ida, I have promised you in marriage."

"Promised me in marriage!" repeated Ida, in startlingly scornful tones. "You have exceeded your right. No one, not my own dear mother, whom you know I loved above all beings, should, were she this moment here, bias me in my marriage relations."

Ida's eyes flashed decisively.

"But, there is immense wealth, a high position, splendid jewels, Ida."

"I care not for them all, unless I love their giver," she replied.

"Your father will end his days in happiness and comfort, if he could but see you the wife of this suitor."

"In Rose Cottage, with me and Hetty to care for you, you will pass your days just as happily and peacefully. Do not indulge in any foolish thoughts of a marriage for me, father, for there is but one man on God's footstool I would marry."

The proud blush on her sweet face strengthened her noble assertion.

"Ida Tressel, you have always been an obedient, affectionate daughter; never in word or deed have you given me occasion to reproach you. To-day I impose my last command upon you; as my loving child, I wish you, nay, I command you, to obey."

Ida arose, and returned his sternly earnest glance.

"You know we owe four hundred dollars on our house, and our creditor declares it must and shall be paid within the month."

He paused to note the effect of his language. Ida was pale, and a trifle angry, but she nodded imperiously for him to continue.

"A certain wealthy man loves you, and wishes to make you his wife, and the mistress of his elegant mansion. You can not fail of being happy, perfectly happy, and I will save my home, and with Hetty to wait upon me, will live comfortably enough."

"Well? is that all?" asked Ida, when he paused.

"That is all."

"First, then, if old Andrew Joyce insists upon having his money in such an impossible time, do not be worried. We possess a good friend at the Archery, and Mr. Fred will willingly, gladly, loan the amount. Thus Rose Cottage need not be sacrificed."

She ceased, and smiled assuringly.

"Nothing therefore remains, but for you to convey my respects to my suitor, whoever he be, and with them my positive rejection of him and his overtures."

Having thus peremptorily settled the affair to her own satisfaction, she turned away to her household duties.

"Stay, you never asked me who had made this offer?"

Her father caught her arm.

"Because I cared so little. No matter who it is, the answer will apply."

"You shall know—and you must not, dare not refuse. You shall consider it, and when the time comes, let your answer be yes to Andrew Joyce."

A stifled scream broke from Ida.

"Never, never! You frighten me, horrify me! You fill me with loathing and disgust! I, the wife of that toothless, deaf, silly old man? Father, you disgrace me, you insult me."

She turned almost defiantly back upon him.

He smiled bitterly.

"This is the return you give me for the education I struggled so hard to get you? When your mother and I went hungry to buy you fine dresses, that you might not be ashamed among your companions. This is your thanks, is it? This what your learning and your religion teaches you?"

The tears sprang to Ida's eyes.

"You wrong me, father. Have I not always obeyed you, and do you not acknowledge it? When, as a father, you bade your child do this, do that, I never rebelled; but, when you would bid me bury myself alive, when you command me to shut away all happiness, all joy forever from me, I repeat you exceed your prerogative—you do what no earthly power has a right to do."

Mr. Tressel watched every play of her features as she replied.

"But, my word is passed, and Andrew Joyce comes on Sunday to greet you, his betrothed bride, and place the costly diamond on your finger."

"And I solemnly declare that while I am in full possession of my mind and reason, while I am capable of knowing my own heart, I will never, under any circumstances, under any pretense, for any purpose, marry that disgusting man."

She turned indignantly away, and in her own apartment calmed her justly outraged feelings.

(To be continued.)

THE SUNBEAM IN THE COTTAGE.

BY MISS MARY RICHARDSON.

Oh, the long, the cold, cold winter,
With its glistening mantle white
Spreads over all the vales and hill-tops,
Shimmering in the silvery light.

Then the old oaks cased in armor,
Toss aloft their glittering spears,
Shake their arms in wild defiance
When the dark storm-king appears.

Or he comes, that fearless ice-king,
Whistling madly at the door,
Bearded with the cold icicles,
In his train the north winds roar.

And the frantic little snow-flakes
Dancing wildly here and there,
Wreath the quaking shrubs and branches
With fantastic garlands fair.

All the while the fire is burning
In the cottage, clear and bright,
And a little stranger sunbeam
Fills the house with love and light.

Yes, a sunbeam is the infant
Sleeping on its mother's breast,
Like a dew-drop, 'mid the petals
Of a floweret gone to rest.

Duke White:

OR,

THE GREEN RANGER OF THE SCIOTO.

BY CHARLES E. LA SALLE,
AUTHOR OF "BURT BUNKER, THE TRAPPER."

CHAPTER XVII.

HO! FOR THE BLOCK-HOUSE.

EVEN in that moment of peril the woman's nature of Lizzie Rushton asserted itself; for, as thoroughly as she despised Elijah Lamb, she could not willingly see him served as he had served herself.

"Where is he?" she asked, as they started away; "it will not do to leave him here alone; dastard and coward as he is, I wish him no harm."

"He ain't *here*," replied the scout; "he's making tracks fur home, and it'll be all we kin do to overhaul him afore he gits thar."

This was partly a venture upon the part of Duke White, who knew that 'Lije would turn up before long, and he was not going to endanger the safety of all for such a worthless one as he.

The ranger took the lead, plunging straight into the wood, with his long, loping walk. There was no path to guide him, and the faint starlight scarcely penetrated the gloomy labyrinth of the wood, yet there was no danger of his going astray. The tiny stars overhead were not without their use to him. A glance upward, whenever they were shining, was sufficient to give him the points of the compass, and with his face now turned toward the distant block-house, there was no danger of his going astray.

Pee Wit, it may be said, was the rear-guard. He remained some distance behind, so as to give notice of the approach of the Wyandots, in case they should take up the pursuit, as there seemed every probability of their doing.

It was yet early in the evening, which was a most fortunate thing for the fugitives, as there was no possibility of their being followed with any degree of certainty, until the Wyandots should be given daylight whereby to discover and follow their trail.

There was little of labor in this flight, to the young lovers, as they journeyed side by side. Their hearts were full, and the future was radiant with hope; they found the occasion a good one for converse, and the interchange of those sweet little thoughts so uninteresting to others, but so immensely absorbing to themselves.

All night long was the flight continued, with scarcely any intermission. When the gray mist of morning began breaking through the wood, Duke made a halt, which he announced would last for a couple of hours.

"Some of us want a little sleep, and some of us want breakfast, and some of us," he added, with a significant look at the lovers, "don't want any thing but to be together. Sit down, and make yourselves comfortable, and Pee Wit 'll soon be yere with our breakfast."

A fire was speedily kindled out of the abundant material so near at hand, and by the time it was fairly going, the dwarf came, in, with the fore-quarters of a deer upon his shoulder.

"Where did you git that?" asked Chapman, in some surprise.

"Me got him," replied the Indian.

"I see you have; but did you shoot him?"

"Me shot him."

"I am sure I didn't hear you," added Chapman, "nor any thing that sounded like it."

"Wah! I could sw'ar to that," laughed the scout; "you didn't hear nothin' but the music of the gal's voice in yer ears. Howsumever, it's all right; I was young once, but it was a good while ago."

There was a trace of melancholy in the hunter's voice, as he uttered the last words, and Lizzie was sure she saw a tear glisten in his eye, but it was quickly dashed away, as if he were ashamed of the betrayal of weakness, and he added:

"Now, Pee Wit, you may cook that 'ere meat as quick as you know how."

"Have we much time to wait?" asked Chapman, who recalled the cause of this midnight flight.

"Yas; we've got a night's start of 'em, and we can take a couple of hours, and be all the better for it. I'll take a nap while we stop, and don't wake me up."

The hunter, like the men of his class, possessed the faculty of waking whenever he chose, so that, unless danger appeared

in some new and unexpected form, his companions knew better than to disturb him.

He walked away, a short distance, and lay down upon the leaves, with his head near the trunk of a large tree, and in five minutes was sound asleep—the slumber of a healthy frame and easy mind.

Directly by the camp flowed a small stream of icy cold and limpid water, the source of which, Pee Wit informed them, was about a hundred yards distant. While Chapman was assisting their Indian friend, as best he could, Lizzie concluded to visit this, as a means of whiling away the time on her hands.

As our hero observed her moving off, he cautioned her about wandering too far away from camp, and she promised to heed the warning.

The spring was found as had been indicated, and making a primitive cup, from a number of leaves, she stooped down and lifted some of the refreshing fluid to her lips. She then turned, and was about starting back to camp, when she was startled by the apparition of a man before her.

One glance only was needed to show her that it was no less a person than Elijah Lamb!

There he stood, directly in her path, smiling hugely, as if he expected she would go into an ecstasy of joy at the sight of his familiar and cherished features once more.

'Lije stood thus a moment, and then he asked, in his most winsome manner:

"Ain't you real glad to see me, now?"

"Where under the sun did you come from?" Lizzie found breath to ask. "The last I saw of you, you was running away from our house—"

"Yes, dearest Lizzie, you don't know how bad that made me feel—"

"I should think it would make *any* one feel bad," she interrupted with indignant warmth, as she recalled the cowardly act. "I never saw any thing so disgraceful in my life."

"You see I climbed down the window, at great risk of breaking my neck, for I had a good plan in my head. I knowed there were Indians outside, and my plan was to get to the block-house,—fetch a lot of men out, put myself at their head, and capture every one of them."

"But you didn't?"

"No; before I could get the men together, the Indians nabbed you, I'm sorry to say."

"Mr. Lamb—"

"Elijah, now—" he interrupted, stepping closer and smiling more sweetly than ever.

"I prefer to call you Mr. Lamb; I wish to say that the manner in which you acted proves that you are a coward, without a particle of courage."

"That shows, dearest Lizzie, that you don't understand it," he replied, with the same benignant mildness.

"*Any* one that would act as you did has no claim upon the respect of others."

"You say *any* one; do you mean that, my dear?"

"Yes, I do," returned our heroine, who, by this time, had wrought herself up to quite a passion.

"Any one—no matter whom?"

"Yes; *any* one," she retorted, with flashing eyes, and was about adding more, when he exclaimed:

"Jewhilkins! you done just as I did."

Lizzie was too astounded for a moment to make any reply. It was evident that 'Lije looked upon her and his conduct as precisely the same, and that there was as much pretext for one as there was for another.

The Yankee grinned more than ever. He was so jubilant that he muttered audibly to himself:

"I got her that time."

"Do you really mean what you say?" asked our heroine, who saw the affirmative answer written so plainly in his face, that it was superfluous for her to ask it.

"Of course I do; now come, dearest, darling, let's make up; *won't* we be happy when we get home and go to keeping house?"

And before she knew what he was about, the fellow actually threw his arms about her, and gave her a warm, loving kiss!

CHAPTER XVIII.

CONCLUSION.

THE impudence of the Yankee lover was almost sublime. Having secured the coveted kiss from the warm cheek of the beautiful Lizzie Rushton, he was certain that every thing was "all right," and he said:

"We will now return to camp, where they must be feeling very much distressed at my long absence."

And he walked down the rivulet, with our heroine following, unable to repress a smile at the assurance of the Yankee.

As may be supposed, there was some surprise at his reappearance; and when Chapman saw him coming with Lizzie, he was disposed to be slightly disturbed; but she soon gained an opportunity to acquaint him with the facts, when his amusement was not less than hers.

Duke White was still asleep. Elijah proposed to awake him, that no delay might occur in making him acquainted with his safe return, but Chapman would not permit it.

"He is unconscious," he said, "and a few minutes one way or the other can make no difference to him in that condition. His joy will be all the greater, when he finally learns it."

"I guess you're right," replied Lamb, after carefully deliberating upon the matter. "I know he has been very much worried about me, and, Jewhilkins! won't he be tickled! Do you know that I couldn't get Duke to start out to rescue my dearest Lizzie, without I went with him?"

"No; what was the reason?"

"He was afraid, till he got me to promise to go with him; though, of course, when I knowed he was after Lizzie dear, nothin' could keep me from goin'."

Elijah rattled on in this manner, until all had eaten their dinner, and Duke White opened his eyes and prepared to eat his. There was some cross-firing between them, and then they resumed their homeward journey.

Pee Wit, as usual, was sent on the back-trail to make sure that no danger stole upon them unawares. He had been gone but a little while, when a peculiar cry reached the ears of our friends.

"That means thar's danger," said Duke, with some excitement in his manner; "we mustn't wait yere too long."

"Jewhilkins! that's what I think!" exclaimed Lamb, springing to his feet and starting ahead, while the others were not much behind him.

The fugitives were still a long way from home, and it was the height of imprudence for them to run any unnecessary risk. The scout took the lead, walking quite rapidly, and compelling 'Lije to keep behind him.

In the course of an hour came a signal that sounded like the first, but which, nevertheless, Duke declared was an announcement that the danger had passed for the present.

The flight was continued until nightfall, when Pee Wit came in and stated that their trail had been crossed by a strange party, who had paused, examined, and then began following it; but from some cause or other, they drew off after proceeding for a mile or two. His conviction—with which the scout agreed—was that there was no enemy at all upon their trail.

A good night's rest succeeded this day's travel, every one of the company sleeping at least a portion of the night.

Lamb begged to be allowed to act as sentinel while his friends slept; but, as he was the first one to fall asleep, there was not much faith placed in his guardianship.

A thorough reconnaissance made by the dwarf in the morning, failed to discover any thing suspicious, and the homeward journey was resumed with high hopes upon the part of all.

In this manner our friends progressed until they were within a day's journey of the settlement, when they reached an old cabin that had been occupied years before by a hermit-like hunter, where they decided to remain until morning.

It was just growing dusk as they entered, and it was fixed up as comfortable as possible for the accommodation of Lizzie Rushton, who had so thoroughly learned by this time how to "rough" it, that she enjoyed the night's slumber as completely as did Duke White himself.

Elijah was the last one to awake in the morning, and when he did so, he knew by the expression of the faces around him that something dreadful had happened. He saw that the lower story of the cabin was strongly barricaded, as though to repel some expected assault.

"What—what's the matter?" he stammered, looking from one face to the other. "Jewhilkins! what makes you all look so thundering scared?"

The scout exclaimed, as if to himself:

"Will the varmints *never* let us be? Can't we go inter an old cabin to rest, without gettin' a pack of 'em outside?"

"That's it, eh?" shuddered 'Lije.

"We want a brave man," resumed the scout, but addressing the whole affrighted group; "We're clus to the block-house; anybody can reach it in two hours by runnin' hard, and git us help to drive the varmints away. Who will go?"

"Mr. Lamb is used to such feats as that," said Lizzie. "I am sure he will be glad to incur the risk for my sake."

"You're the man!" exclaimed Duke, slapping him on the shoulder.

"The very one!" struck in Chapman coming up on the other side.

"The man—he run fast," squeaked Pee Wit.

"What—what in thunder do you want?" stammered Lamb, beginning to feel exceedingly uncomfortable. "It's all-fired queer that I'm the only one to do any thing."

"We'll open the door," replied the ranger, in a low, earnest, rapid voice, "and let you out; you steal through the varmints (be sure to have yer knife handy, fur likely ye'll have to stick two or three afore ye kin git through) and hurry to the block-house, and fetch Williams and a half a dozen men, and it'll be all right. Come, now, all's ready."

'Lije was fairly pushed to the door, but there he stoutly resisted. He was not ready yet to be sacrificed.

"I'd be glad—that is, glad to do it for you all, especially for dearest Lizzie—"

"I know you would," our heroine hastened to say; "so don't wait any longer."

"But—but—"

"But what?" impatiently demanded the scout.

"I feel my old pain come back!—oh! it's dreadful!" and placing his hands upon his bowels, the Yankee doubled up like a jack-knife.

"I'll tell you what I'll do," he added, quickly recovering himself; "I'll go up—"

stairs and *keep watch*, while one of you goes to the block-house."

And, before any one could interfere, the brave ranger hurried nimbly up the dilapidated ladder, and vanished from view.

A few minutes later the door of the cabin was gently opened, and Duke White stole out. He was followed by Lizzie, Chapman, and Pee Wit; and when all were on the outside, they stole away into the wood, careful to keep on the side of the cabin which had no opening for a window, until they were out of sight in the forest.

And still the Green Ranger sat watching in the upper story, his eyes and ears on the alert for the first sign of danger.

But there was none threatening him. There were no "varmints" within miles of the cabin, and had not been for a long time.

Lamb made his appearance in the settlement just in time to be invited to the wedding of Captain Chapman and Lizzie Rushton. When he found out that the thing was "settled," he went to our hero and warned him that if he persisted in marrying his "dearest," he would take revenge by hanging himself!

"That I consider is the best use to which you can be put," replied the young officer, "and it is a powerful inducement for me to hurry the ceremony; however, 'Lije, defer your original scheme for the benefit of the community until *after* the wedding, and be with us."

The Green Ranger *did* attend the wedding, after all, and deferred his plan of vengeance indefinitely, and so all ended happily.

THE END.

Grace Lorraine's Wooing.

BY FANNY ELLIOTT.

"AND so the old Mortimer property has been sold at last, has it, Kent? To whom, do you know?"

Le Roy Raymond asked the question in the most casual way; therefore, the whistle of amazement that arose to his lips when he saw proud, stately Kent Etheridge blush like a school-girl.

"Bless my presiding planet, Kent! but what have I insinuated in my simple query to affect you so?"

Raymond cast away his half-smoked cigar, and peered maliciously in Etheridge's handsome face.

Kent laughed before he answered.

"Because you happened to touch me on a tender spot, I suppose, Roy. I thought you knew who'd bought the old estate. I supposed every one had heard of the Lorraines, particularly the daughters."

"So it's the lady, eh? You've gone and went and fallen in love, Kent Etheridge? I'm overwhelmed with surprise—you, the invincible, you the invulnerable, at last a captive! Three times three for Miss Lorraine."

"It is not Miss Lorraine, at all, Raymond. You can have her. It's the youngest one, Miss Grace. Such a beauty you never saw. Such eyes—oh, Le Roy, they'd set your heart afire!"

"Of course, and burn me up, too, I suppose. Of course Miss Grace is perfection—when was sweetheart ever aught else?—and of course an angel can not hold a candle to her."

Le Roy laughed wickedly, while a frown gathered on Kent Etheridge's face.

"Don't speak so lightly over her my boy. She's too pure, too gentle and womanly to be jested about."

His thoughtful brown eyes took a tender glow, and his mustached lip wore just the faintest trace of a proud smile.

"You're a goner! Never before did you bid me cease joking about the dozens of ladies who have fallen in love with you; and I take this occasion as a very bad sign—a fatal sign, my boy."

Le Roy's face was lugubrious to Induceness, but Kent Etheridge never smiled back to him.

"That is because I never loved before, Raymond. But now—*now*, I have Grace Lorraine enshrined in the very depths of my soul."

Le Roy Raymond's light, soulless laugh followed Kent's manly speech.

"As I said—you're in a hopeless condition. My advice is—marry her! There's nothing to prevent, you know."

A bitter sarcasm rung in his tone, that made Etheridge wince; then the angry light gleamed in his eyes.

"Don't taunt me, Le Roy, because I am not worth a hundred dollars in the world, and Grace Lorraine can boast a half-million."

"What of that? I thought love knew no such mercenary barriers. Such an angel as Miss Grace would not object to her mortal consort being moneyless, would she?"

"As if I'd offer her a poor man's home—*she*, with servants at her beck!"

"It would go sort o' hard, wouldn't it, for her to get up of a cold morning and light the fire and make an omelet, boil the coffee—"

"That'll do," Kent quietly interpolated, a flush kindling on either cheek. "When you see Grace, you'll never speak so again. Good-night, Le Roy; I'm off to earn a V on over-time—for *her*," he added softly, as he buttoned his overcoat under his chin and went out into the cold January night.

its shining silver, crystalline glass and transparent china; the lily-waxen table-cloth swept the velvet carpet in snowy piles of linen; a music-throated canary sung in its gilded cage in the sunny oriel window, where bloomed rare plants; quaint, magnificent furniture adorned the room; elegant articles of *virtu* were disposed gracefully about, and amid all the splendor sat several ladies, stylish, haughty, refined.

"You're not completed the list, Victorine, have you?"

Fairy-formed Grace Lorraine looked up from the steaming cup of chocolate, and balanced the tiny silver spoon across the gold-banded rim.

"Yes. Why? Did you wish to add any name? There can be several written down yet, if you desire it."

Miss Lorraine was a tall, slender blonde, whose beauty would fascinate, while little black-eyed Grace would win outright.

Matronly Mrs. Judge Lorraine glanced to the youngest daughter with a meaning smile.

"It's young Mr. Etheridge, the architect, and his friend, Mr. Raymond, you mean?"

The blush on Grace's face revealed the truth of her mother's words.

"Grace," and Victorine laid her fork across her pearl-handled knife, and fixed her bright blue eyes on her sister's face, "you are not going to fall in love with that black-eyed, black-haired young Etheridge?"

Grace shook her head defiantly, while her cheeks glowed.

"What's to hinder? I didn't say so, did I? But, when I do fall in love, it will be with some one as refined and educated and noble as Kent Etheridge."

"He is as poor as a church mouse, while his friend there—young lawyer Raymond—is rich. Set your cap for him, Grace."

"Indeed, I shall do no such foolish thing. If Mr. Etheridge is the poorer, he certainly is the nobler of the two. I'm going to invite him, any way."

"On a six-weeks' speaking acquaintance? Very well."

Victorine had a cold, hard way of speaking, but Grace cared about as much as if a kitten had mewed.

"I intend to know him better before another six weeks goes by."

"Grace!"

More Lorraine uttered the name reprovingly.

"I can not consent to your interest in Mr. Etheridge to the exclusion of Mr. Raymond. Such partiality will be embarrassing."

Grace's head tossed playfully.

"Ask 'em both, then, only hear what my oracle sayeth: 'In six weeks from this very morning, I shall be engaged to be married to Kent Etheridge.'"

Mrs. Lorraine uttered a horrified little cry, while haughty Victorine curled her lip scornfully.

"That I shall do, dear, frightened mamma and *chère sœur*. 'All's fair in love and war,' you know."

"Yes, I'd gladly join this party, Raymond, and you're a lucky dog that can afford it. I wish I could; but two hundred is a sum I can not afford to lose for pleasuring."

"Not even in Miss Grace's company?"

Le Roy Raymond glanced in Kent Etheridge's face as he spoke.

"Not even for the priceless pleasure of her society?"

"Then I am going to cut you out, Kent. This will be the very time for me, won't it? True, though, Etheridge, I'm more than half in love with her."

Kent's lips whitened and trembled.

"She can't help loving you, Roy. You are rich, too, and a more desirable match every way."

"Thanks, noble rival. Hello! who's that escaped imp of perdition?"

Raymond pointed to a curiously-starting little figure before them, whose tangled hair fell over a dirty face; whose hand was nuttely extended for chance charity. A common sight, such as one sees daily in New York.

"Give her a cent, Kent, and let her go. Here, sis."

He tossed a nickel coin in her hand, and nodded toward Etheridge.

"What do you want, little girl? Aren't you able to speak?"

The child stood gazing dumbly at them, the pinched features relating their own sad story.

"Are you hungry, or cold, or ill? Come by the fire and warm you."

Kent waved his hand toward the glowing office-stove, while Le Roy laughed outright.

"That's right, old fellow; give her the best velvet-cushioned arm-chair, and ring for champagne and oysters. Maybe she's an angel—the 'unawares' kind, you know."

His language, though taunting, did not imply half as much as his tone; and even the beggar-child felt it, for she shrunk back as if hurt.

Kent flushed up angrily; then turning to the girl, smiled reassuringly.

"Come along, child. The fire will do you good. Can't you speak a word? Who are you? What do you want?"

"My mother's sick; my father's dead—"

"Of course! Who ever saw a beggar whose mother wasn't sick—whose father wasn't dead?"

Le Roy's harsh tones came ringing on the child's ear; and with a sob she turned away.

"This is my office, little girl. Tell me

your trouble, and I'll help you, if I think you speak the truth."

The pale face brightened, and she poured her simple story in Kent's sympathetic ear.

"There—there's twenty dollars. Take it, little one, and may it make you free from suffering for one while at least."

With a face all alight, the girl skipped away, followed by Raymond's loud, scornful laugh.

"Upon my word, Kent Etheridge, I never took you for a fool before, and I solemnly believe you bade eternal farewell to your senses. To be imposed upon by an adventurous beggar like that to the tune of twenty dollars, when you couldn't afford to join our party! I shall be obliged to inform Miss Grace of your preference, when I go up this evening. Kent, I'm going to ask Grace Lorraine to marry me."

He watched the handsome face as it first flushed with anger, then paled with a sudden heartache.

"She may, Raymond. And yet, if she knew how I worshiped her—"

"She does know."

Like a thunderbolt the sweet voice of Grace Lorraine fell on their ears.

"Mr. Etheridge, here are your twenty dollars, which you gave me five minutes ago. In returning it, I ask a favor—a very great favor. Kent, may I be your wife?"

Her luminous eyes revealed her secret, and Etheridge caught her in his arms.

"Will you be—say, *will* you be, my darling?"

"Ask mamma and Victorine," she whispered, pointing to the ladies near the door.

"Regarding your anticipated proposal, Mr. Raymond, you need not trouble yourself. A heart that can pity a friendless child, that can befriend the suffering poor, can not help but cherish and love one who is above those needs. And please remember, too, that angels of the 'unawares' sort are not always to be found in the Scriptures. Next time, you had better entertain them."

And while Mr. and Mrs. Kent Etheridge enjoyed their married life at the old Mortimer property, Le Roy Raymond has spent hundreds of dollars on divers little beggar-children; none of whom, however, we feel compelled to admit, ever turned out to be a cherub in disguise.

A Tale of Spirits.

BY LUCIUS MARKHAM.

It was a hideous autumn night. I was the sole occupant of a partly-ruined stone farm-house, situated in a deep ravine, through which madly rushed a growling stream of turbid water. Massive oaks grew around the building—the wind fairly howled among their branches, and a cold rain beat upon their broad leaves with a sound which, to my ear, had a peculiarly doleful import. I scarcely heard the pattering of the rain-drops on the window-panes, this pleasant music being drowned by the roar of wind and water among the oaks and from the stream. I leaned back in my chair, and shut my eyes determinedly, but it was all in vain. I could not sleep. The fire was getting low; I stirred it. The clock struck. It was "the witching hour of night." I was in the mood for visions of

"Pale, sheeted ghosts, with gory locks, up-starting from their tombs—
All fantasies and images that flit in midnight glooms—
Hags, goblins, demons, lemures."

I should hardly have been surprised, any moment, to have seen a hobgoblin glide in at the window. I had bolted all the doors. Suddenly the front-door opened wide—the wind blew the ashes and smoke from the fireplace all about the room, and the rain beat upon the floor. I reached for the poker—a heavy iron one—and was about to push the door back, when it was slammed forcibly, and I plainly heard the bolt fly within its catch. I felt a cold chill creep over me; my head thrilled as if "each particular hair" had an independent, isolated position. I raised my hand. The movement was arrested by a sepulchral voice, which said, in tones as measured as those of the ghost of Hamlet's father may have used, "Young man!"

I instinctively stared around the room. In a moment I saw the semblance of a man before me. It was plainly visible, but had an indefinable, shadowy appearance.

"Who are you?" I demanded, the words being forced from me in my agitation.

"A Spirit!" was the reply, in tones which made me shudder, as if a chill from the damps of a grave had fastened upon me.

"A Spirit?" I repeated, not knowing that my lips had moved, until I heard the sound of my own words.

"A Spirit of Unrest. Until some mortal shall be found brave enough to do my bidding, I am doomed to visit this room every stormy night," continued the shadow, without notice of my interruption, in that same hollow voice, which reverberated as if it had been carried some distance through irregular tin pipes.

Had I possessed control of myself, I know not what I *might* have done, but an irresistible impulse impelled me, and I ejaculated, "What?"

"In yonder corner," continued the Spirit, pointing with its shadowy finger, "beneath a plank that you can raise, is the cause of my unrest. Bring it forth!"

I felt that the command was one which I could not disobey, and as if moved by a

galvanic battery, I *jerked* my way to the corner. My foot struck a loose plank. I raised it, and I saw a small, rough box. I took it out, and hastily turned my back to the wall. The Spirit had not moved. That hollow-sounding voice said:

"I was the proprietor of this house. I owned the lands around it. I became a slave. The contents of that box became my master. Lands wasted—friends fled—health failed—I died with imps alone around me. It was a night like this. My brain was consuming with liquid fire. You have the cause. In the agonies of death I sought it. I fell upon the plank you have lifted. There I had for years hid the poison. Devils took possession of me. When I can get that box, peace will come to me. I have been here for it often. My walkings have frightened away the friends whom I left. I was doomed until some mortal should take it from its place of concealment and give it to me. *Let me have it!*"

Convulsively I reached out my hand. The box was crushed within the Spirit's shadowy grasp. I heard a noise like the smashing of glass—the floor was strewn with pieces of a bottle; and a smell of alcohol, so strong it almost stifled me, filled the room.

"Ha! ha!" sounded that long-drawn-out sepulchral voice.

I looked and I was alone. The storm had increased in violence. I knew that the stream had overflowed its banks. A limb torn from one of the oaks near the building, was blown forcibly through a side window, and a torrent of rain followed it. I began to be alarmed as I had not before been. I shrunk to a corner, where I was sheltered from the storm and wind. A gleam of light streamed with the wind in at the broken window. It was a dismal, sulphurous light. It was stationary, but a few feet from me, yet it did not dispel the darkness in which I had been left, when the window was broken and my lights blown out.

"Ha! ha!" was a demoniac laugh which came from it. An indescribably dreadful sensation stole over me. I did not tremble—my fear was too great. I thought my heart had ceased beating. It seemed as if my head would burst asunder.

"Ha-ha!" rung that fiendish laugh again, from the light. "I am chief of the Spirits of Unrest. You dissolved the charm that held one a victim to my earth-bait. Men know us as the Will-o'-the-wisp. What men call alcohol lures them into my service. It is the decree of the Prince of Darkness that you shall take the place of the spirit you liberated. *Come! ha-ha!*"

I fell to the floor—all was changed. Lights gleamed around me. I heard no wind, no rain—every thing was familiar. Near me stood a table, on which were decanters, glasses, cigars, and cards. Empty chairs were drawn back a few feet from it. Close by me was an arm-chair turned over. I sat on it, and endeavored to collect my thoughts. In a few minutes I was *myself* again.

I had been spending the evening with a few jovial friends. I had drunk freely. When they left me I leaned back in my chair against the wall, and fell asleep. I had knocked one of the decanters from the table, and broken it. My chair had slipped, and I was thrown to the floor. That hour of dreams was of great service to me. I have been a teetotaler ever since.

Our Ballads.

[We propose to award a corner in our paper to original ballads, and will be happy to receive from our contributors contributions of that class. Some of the most charming poems in the language are ballads. We hope our contributors having a talent for this species of composition, will let us hear from them.]

THE CAPTAIN AT THE POST OF DEATH.

The sailor paced the midnight deck
With slow and thoughtful tread;
And swift, before the blowing breeze,
The vessel lightly sped.

His thoughts were 'mid his native hills:
Upon his native shore
He seemed to stand, and seemed to be
Where he had been before.

The helmsman at his wonted post,
The ship's wheel slowly turned;
And often to his thoughtful gaze
Past like a dream returned—

But hark! A cry which rings a knell
Of death in every heart;
And makes the slumberer from his couch
In sudden terror start—

That cry of fire, which, oh how oft,
Has rung across the sea!
From which the stoutest sailor's heart
Shrinks, robbed of all its glee.

Oh what a change! A moment past
Those sleepers, far away,
In joy's transporting dreams were lost,
Or basked in Friendship's ray.

But now the pleasant dream takes wing,
And bosoms wildly beat,
And broken voices through the night
Are heard, and hurried feet.

A boat is on the crimsoned sea:
In its wake a vessel lies—
Its masts entwined in flames, which flash
Like beacons to the skies.

But see yon fearless form on deck!
With calm and steady mien,
Amid the raging element,
With Death he views the scene.

He stands: no muscle moves; he scarce
Appears to draw a breath;
So self-possessed, one might suppose
He could not think of death.

A crash tremendous, like the roar
Of thunder in the sky!
A moment gone, and board and mast
Are all that meet the eye!

And where is he—the dauntless soul
From fear of death so free?
He sleeps the silent sleep of death:
His grave is in the sea.

He died as he had lived; the breeze
Sighs soft his requiem now;
Beneath the broad blue ocean's swell
His last remains lie low.

J. G. MAXLEY, JR.

Cruiser Crusoe:

OR,
LIFE ON A TROPIC ISLE.

BY LAFAYETTE LAFORREST.

NUMBER TWELVE.

Impelling my raft to my usual landing-place, I soon reached the other side, and peered about once more, the more eagerly that I at once distinguished on the water a small raft of the same material as my own, which had been cast adrift, and was floating in the current, on the right side of my island toward the fall.

My emotions now were beyond control. There could be no reasonable doubt now. But having determined to follow the trail, and on foot, I peered about, and at once discovered the spot where my dear fugitive had landed. Again I saw the marks of two small naked feet, for quite four or five steps, when the party had halted, seated herself, and put on—what! have my senses left me, that I fancy such things?—a *manufactured shoe*, the mark of which, with its high heel and elegant foot, is clear upon the sand.

This was too much for me, and I was about to rush blindly forward, when again the reflection came to my mind, that in this way I should lose the trail. Determined to put a check on my native impulses, I cautiously examined the tracks, and soon found that my stable had been visited. There were footmarks all round it; and, more than that, a number of fresh branches of trees loved by the zebra had been thrown in.

Every thing seemed friendly and kind. Why, then, fly from me with such pertinacity? However, this could only be cleared up by capture, so I soon found myself following the track. It was easy enough to do, as the high-heeled shoe, or rather, boot, left marks even on the grass. But it was slow work. Every now and then the track diverged, or the ground was bare and hard, or I accidentally missed a sign. But still, if I did go back several times, I never lost it.

One thing I soon discovered. It was in the direction of the sea—in the direction of the distant island.

While my heart fell within me at the prospect of losing her again, I was still more distraught and worried to find a motive for what appeared to me strange and inconsistent conduct. It was quite clear that she had escaped from her former savage, inhuman, and cannibal captors; but how or why had she returned to my island, and having returned, why had she fled again so swiftly, so eagerly?

With all the ingenuity of my mind, and it had been pretty well exercised, I did not come anywhere near the truth. Indeed, simple as it was, the bare thought of it to me would have been incredible, absurd beyond all reasonable belief. And yet I, who had been so miraculously saved, who had found bread and manna in the wilderness, should have been surprised, been astonished at nothing.

When I became firmly convinced that she was taking her way as quickly as possible toward the sea, I used far less caution in my proceedings. But still, it was necessary not to lose the trail, that involving a return journey. I used, however, one precaution—that of barking the trees I passed, so as to be sure to find the return track.

But soon there was no further caution required. The arid rocks of the coast lay before me, and the ground was too hard to leave any trail. She might have taken to the right or to the left; but it was more likely that, after keeping so long in this direction, she had sought the water's edge, than have entered the thicket to the right, or the gloomy forest to the left.

With considerable hope still of overtaking her, I took a clump of bushes, shaded by a live oak, for a guide, and made straight for the cliffs. They were soon gained. I looked wildly down upon the shore—nothing was to be seen. All this seemed to me so much like magic that I knew not what to think. There was one thing, however, to be said—she had many hours' start of me, as, following the trail so minutely, I had been six hours on my way, and it was nearly the dusk of evening.

I put my gun down, and laying myself flat upon the cliff's edge, drew forth my telescope, with which I swept the whole range of vision—nothing, nothing, nothing!

Night was now rapidly falling. In a few minutes it would be dark. The position was by no means an agreeable one; so far from home, so utterly disappointed, so weary and desolate. To add to the gloominess of my solitude, as the day ceased I could hear the occasional quail of the night-heron, which made the succeeding hush more dreary, during which even the falling of leaves, and rustling of insects upon dry grass, was hailed as a relief to the oppressive silence.

I was overwhelmed with grief, and never felt in that savage wilderness how inexpressibly solemn was utter silence combined with the deprivation of light.

Then suddenly I thought I heard the purr and breathing of some animal close behind me. I wheeled slowly round, and could see nothing. Next instant I became aware, as the moon burst forth in all its rich beauty, that, but a few yards distant from me, was a huge lion. Mechanically I felt for my gun. No sooner did my hand move than a low and fearful growl warned me to be cautious.

The beast, which was, perhaps, the largest

I ever saw, impressed me at the moment with the feeling that it was a grand and imposing sight to gaze upon the king of animals in his native wilds, especially when he assumes an attitude of surprise or defiance. I had yet to learn how little is his inclination to cope with civilized man. But, on this occasion, though my imagination was in a heated and excited state, I considered it best to act with extreme caution. When wounded they will often spring furiously at their assailant, and then, in most cases, woe betide him, as their muscular strength is very great.

Suddenly I saw the animal turn slowly round and gaze in a direction different to mine; and following the direction of his eyes, I saw a troop of some kind of deer, with short horns, passing over the plain below at no great distance. So intent was my gaze for a moment, that I forgot the lion, but suddenly there was a low, stifled growl, and then the faint cry as of some dying animal. Then, again, all was silent and still. I strained my eyes in vain, a cloud having passed over the moon, to catch sight of what was going on, but I could hear the crunching of the victim's bones.

I held my breath in fearful suspense, not knowing when I might be attacked, or whence. But for some time I made nothing out, and, weary and exhausted, allowed myself to doze off a little, imagining the beast would be satisfied with his prey. But I have no doubt my sleep, under the circumstances, was a half-waking, for I never seemed to lose entire consciousness. This is carried to a great extent in the hunter, who has much of night-watching, and to this remarkable faculty he often owes the preservation of his life.

Be this as it may, something on this occasion seemed to tell me that I was in danger, and I moved uneasily in my sleep, gradually, but surely, waking to consciousness. Then, as my senses came to me, scattered and confused from the events of the day, I *heard*, close to my face, though the darkness was so great I could see nothing, the slow breathing of some large animal, followed by what appeared to me the good-humored purring of a great cat.

But I knew it was a lion.

He could not have been more than two yards from me, if so much; indeed, he appeared to be actually stooping over me. For a moment my senses were stupefied. I gave myself up for dead, and, indeed, there can be no doubt that few men ever had more serious cause for dread than I had on this occasion. I knew not what to do. My first impulse was to rise and fly, but this would, in all probability, have proved fatal, so I determined to get possession of my gun, which was lying at full-cock, close to my hand somewhere.

But I could not remember exactly; so slowly, and with a fearful sinking of the heart, accompanied by a humble prayer, I began to raise myself to a sitting posture. Naturally I endeavored to attract the animal as little as possible, so made no perceptible noise. But its hearing was terrible keen, for, faint as was the sound, it was heard by the savage beast, which gave a growl which I could not mistake.

It appeared to me to be about to spring, though for half a minute I could not see it. Then, indeed, I made out a dark lump, like a rock, and at once, after commending my soul to God, pulled the trigger. I never shall forget the double effect of the reverberating echoes of the report and the roars of the wild and savage beast, which was, however, in the agonies of death. His fearful growls, however, as he rolled and tore up the grass and stones, induced me to decamp to a distance; nor did I sleep much that night.

When morning broke, I found the animal to be a very large one, but quite dead. At any other time I would have skinned him, but my thoughts were now bent other ways. I knew not, however, what to do. Had she escaped by the sea, or was she still concealed on the island? I determined to satisfy myself on this point, at any cost, so took to the right of my night-encampment, and made toward the woods. No sooner had I descended from the rocks, than I came upon a plain somewhat like a meadow, though in places it was swampy as a morass, and here I made the looked-for, and, in part, most valuable discovery.

I stood still in perfect awe and trembling, for there, before my face, were the steps of the flying girl turned clearly from the sea, and there, aside and around, were the great splay naked feet of other savages in hot pursuit. Either she was hiding from the fierce blacks whom I had seen on a former occasion, or she was once more their unfortunate prisoner. My rage and indignation knew no bounds, for though I knew nothing of the girl, I felt convinced her intentions were kindly toward me, while, could I have succeeded in calming her apprehension, what a helpmate she would have been to me in my solitude.

But I was well armed; the savages had only bows and spears; and, mad as the idea was, I resolved to follow up and rescue her. Then I thought of returning to my home and fetching the zebra, but the reflection that they might in this way get off the island before I got up with them, determined me to risk every thing, and start at once.

The trail was now easy enough to follow, and I had not tracked it many hundred yards, when it became clearly apparent that the girl was a prisoner. She had tripped, fallen, and been instantly captured by the savages. I then remarked that they made straight for the forest, not turning toward the sea, as I had expected. This made me hopeful that they were still on the island. It was of course very difficult to follow them beneath the foliage of an African forest, but with courage and perseverance one can do any thing. My solitary residence on the island had sharpened my wits, so that many things were easy to me which in a state of civilization would have been impossible.

I saw that they entered the forest where the trees were very lofty and the undergrowth scanty and thin, so that, moving as they did in a scattered way, nothing was easier than to follow their track. The girl walked in the middle, guarded by at least a dozen, so that there could be no chance of escape. Poor thing, I thought to myself, and perhaps never did man more sincerely pity another human being than did I this girl—so true it is that we are affected most deeply where our own interests and affections are concerned.

About two miles further there was a very beautiful spot, which, however, I had avoided as being too much frequented by wild beasts. It was an open glade, with a fountain or pool in the middle, at which the animals came to drink. Here the savages had slept, and here the cruel monsters had inflicted on that vision of beauty and of love the most abominable torture. They had

made a fire for themselves, which is never unwelcome at night in any country, as keeping off both damp and vermin, while at some little distance they had bound the Indian girl to a tree, as I could see by the withes, cut with some sharp instrument on their departure.

But this proved that they were not far off. I drank at the fountain, I ate some fruit and berries, and then once more began my pursuit. Their straggling footsteps were easily followed for a short time, when they suddenly became invisible.

I had reached a chain of small stony hills, on which nothing was visible but a wretched stunted vegetation, that scarcely left a mark. I looked to the right, to the left, on all sides, but could not discover a sign. Then my reasoning faculties were brought to bear, as I judged it most likely that they would follow in the direction they had already been going, and in which I feared the great continent lay.

I accordingly climbed to the summit of the hills, and looked down upon the opposite side. I was now somewhat weary and very much in want of food, my breakfast having been but scanty, but could make out nothing that would serve my purpose until I descended toward the level country, which was very beautiful. It was a mixture of wood and prairie; thickets, clumps, and small woods being scattered over an extensive plain, which rose and fell in waves as high as the great billows of the ocean.

But the plain had other sources of interest. Taking out my telescope to scan its surface in search of the fugitives, I saw here and there the huge heads of elephants, feeding, while in other parts were groups of graceful giraffes that cropped the lofty boughs of trees in peace and quietness.

Then I saw a disturbance among the animals, both elephants and giraffes; and, as I knew that the lion does not hunt in the day, it flashed across my mind that the savages were again hunting, and that the search for ivory and skins was the proximate cause of their presence on my island. But if their minds were given to the chase, the prisoner would in all probability be left under a small guard, and in this way might, perhaps, fall into the power of a gentler and kinder taskmaster.

Taking a careful observation of the direction in which I believed the savages were hunting, I descended with all due caution toward the plain. As was to be expected, when the ground became soft once more, the track of the savages became clear; though now, as if they expected to start game, they kept close together, in a double kind of Indian file.

At length I came in sight of the whole party, or at least a great many of them, as nowhere could I see the girl. The men were engaged in a way that was incomprehensible to me, though afterward it was clear enough. The whole plain was dotted with elephants quietly feeding, and, as usual with these great animals, though they stray great distances in search of food, had evidently spent some time in cropping this halt.

Round the plain, which was scattered with clumps of trees and bushes, were very tall trees, from which the savages were tearing down rough, strong, climbing-plants, or rather vines. Others below were twining these together into a sort of strong fence. It was quite clear that this obstruction was not sufficient to hold the elephant, but it might very likely check him in his flight, and entangle him in the meshes till the hunters had time to kill him.

This done, a number of the savages, and, to my horror, they were altogether over a hundred, made a large circuit, and soon after, making a horrid sound of blowing horns, and yells more maniacal than human, drove many of the herd in the desired direction. I could see, by means of my telescope, the dusky bodies of the savages crawling at full length on the ground, just like snakes, and quite as swiftly.

Away sped several of the huge animals, and, rushing forward with headlong speed, were soon brought up in the tangle of wild vines. Then enraged, and even terrified, they began to tear every thing with their trunks and feet, but the tough vines and other creeping plants gave way at every blow, and the more they labored the more they were held.

Then came up the hunters, some staying on the ground, others climbing trees, and by swift discharges of their arrows and spears soon finished the giant beast, amid loud cries and yells. The hunters were all very cautious, approaching the elephant from behind, or climbing into the loftier branches.

As soon as the savage hunters were satisfied, they began some to cut off the feet, particularly choosing the hind feet, while others were engaged in getting out the ivory. As soon as this horrid scene of butchery was over they moved away, leaving all they could not carry a prey for the cowardly jackals, prowling hyenas and devouring termites ants.

I followed them, keeping carefully in the background, until I reached their halting-place. It was on a gentle slope beneath certain trees where some rude huts had been erected by a small party of youths, but nowhere could I see the Indian girl. Probably she was within the huts.

Now began one of those scenes of actual gorging which appear to be the delight of the savage, whether it be the Esquimaux, devouring thirty pounds of blubber, the Nubian, eating a whole sheep, or the red Indian, swallowing all that is set before him. The feet of the elephant being the choice part, were first, however, prepared quite in an epicurean manner. Holes were dug in the earth and filled with blazing fires; as soon as the wood was quite charred, the feet were placed in their extempore ovens and other fires made over them. Before these, long strips of elephant-meat were warmed, nothing more, and then were consumed. And thus the day wore away with them and with me.

I was hungry, sick and hopeless. What could I do against such a band, and yet it never occurred to my mind to depart.

There was a chain which linked me forcibly to the spot. I hid myself, therefore, in the bushes at no great distance from the pool, whence the hunters took their water, which necessarily they consumed in great abundance. I felt no fear. I would have faced them all for the remotest chance of saving that girl, but how to commence I knew not.

Gradually night fell, very clear and chilly for that part of the country. The savages had made huge fires, round which they were carousing. It seemed to me that some liquor had been added to their other articles of luxury. Seeing that they were so engaged as not to notice me, I crept nearer. They had made a huge fire now in the center of the

camp, and were busy digging up the ground for the baked feet.

They certainly smelt very delicious, and in my hungry state it was a great wonder that I did not crawl in and take my share. Suddenly, however, my attention became wrapped on something else. Gazing across the group, my eyes presently were able to penetrate the gloom, and I saw, seated within a small pent-house like hut, the Indian girl, gazing mournfully at the scene. Her feet and arms were securely bound, so that she could not move at all from the half-reclining posture which she had assumed.

My blood boiled with indignation, that one so beautiful and different from these painted savages, should be thus severely used, and I began to devise the wildest and most absurd plans for her escape. However, before I did any thing rash, I saw the overfed savages gradually lying down with their heads to the fire, to sleep off the stupefying effect of the feast. At the same time the odor of elephant-meat again assailed my nostrils, and I felt how absolutely necessary to enable me to enter upon my arduous undertaking, was the refreshing influence of food.

I crawled toward a spot where I perceived a whole elephant's foot placed on one side, probably in reserve for the morning's meal, and after assuring myself of the savages near it being fast asleep, cut off some portions and devoured them greedily. It was, without exception, the toughest and most disagreeable meat I had ever tasted. It is impossible to describe or explain its taste, because there is no other flesh which, in any way, tastes like it. It seemed to be one mass of muscular fiber or gristle. It was not that it was exactly disagreeable or unpleasant in flavor, but it seemed, no matter what amount of cooking it endured, to be still tough and hard.

But it seemed to renew my energies, and I now determined to effect my great purpose. I had some rum with me, of which I drank rather freely, and then, crawling away made a large circuit in the direction of the hut occupied by the Indian girl. It was now a starlight night, the moon having not yet risen; but beneath the arches of the forest the light was very somber, while every now and then noises disturbed me. It was the night-life of the woods. Now and then the crackling of twigs, and an eloquent grunt told of some perambulating pig; then a whole herd of gazelles, heedless of my presence, swept by chased by wolves; then came the call of the gray partridge to its mate—



CRUISER CRUSOE—BUT A FEW YARDS DISTANT FROM ME WAS A HUGE LION.

these birds sleeping always side by side on one particular branch of a tree, the one first home calling incessantly until the other arrives; then might be distinguished the gambols of monkeys in the trees; and then I stood erect, beside the hut, in view of the whole camp.

As a rule, these savages lie about their fires nearly all night, smoking and telling stories; but the unusual quantity of animal food had deadened their perceptions, so that they slept soundly. Then I peered into the hut. She was awake. Placing my finger on my lips I came in front of her, and raised my other hand warningly. She uttered a shrill but pleasant cry, and again I had vanished into the darkness. My precaution was wise, for several heads were lazily lifted off the ground, and half-a-dozen pair of eyes peered into the skirts of the camp. Then, as if satisfied that it was but the cry of some animal, they curled themselves up, and again gave unmistakable evidence of slumber.

This time I approached the hut gently, and whispered low a gentle hush. Then I drew my knife, and cut her bonds, after which seeing that the ligatures had hurt her, I lifted her in my arms and carried her unresisting form to a tree, where I had left my gun. As soon as I had deposited her on the ground, my next duty was to chafe her wrists and ankles, during which operation she looked at me with a tender and grateful glance which went to my heart. As soon as she seemed able to move I made signs to her to rise and fly, which she did, nothing loth. Clutching my gun with calm determination I led the way, which was in the direction of my own residence.

Camp-Fire Yarns.

BY CAPTAIN MAYNE REID.

The Flat-Boat Pirates.

AN EPISODE OF MISSISSIPPI LIFE.

I KNEW I had wounded the deer; for I could see its blood upon the bushes through which it had rushed after receiving the shot. I thought of going back for my horse before pursuing it. I had left him tied to a tree some two or three hundred yards back, the better to approach the game. While hesitating, I noticed clear sky through the timber on three sides—right, left and in front. This could be caused only by the river, as the whole

bottom-land was covered with a thick cotton-wood forest. It must be a bend in the stream, forming a sort of peninsula, with an isthmus of not more than a hundred yards in width, my position being about midway between the recurvings of the river. In this case the buck would be in a trap, and could not get back into the bottom-land without passing me within shot. His only alternative would be to take to the water, which he might do, or might not. As it was the broad Mississippi, he likely would not; but, in any case, the horse would be no use there; and hastily re-loading, I stalked on afoot.

I had no difficulty in taking up the trail of the stricken animal. Under the shadow of the moss-trellised trees, the soil was damp, and the "slot" was conspicuous—the more so, that the antlered monarch of the forest evidently had been laboring in his flight. Once again I saw goutts of blood upon the palmets, brushed off from his bleeding flanks, as he ran through them.

I soon reached the edge of the river, and there saw his hoofmarks in the mud that selvedged the sloping bank. There were no return tracks; therefore, he had taken to the river. It was the Mississippi, as I have said, but not the main stream. At a glance, I saw it was a "cut-off"—a small, wooded island interposing itself between me and the great "Father of Waters." Beyond doubt, the deer had swum off to the island, there, equally beyond doubt, as I supposed, to lie down and die.

He was a splendid buck, with not less than a dozen "tines" upon his antlers. I had noticed this while drawing a bead upon him. I wanted him for a trophy, and was determined to have him. But how? The branch stream, though not over a hundred yards in width, was of rapid, turbulent current. Stripped, I could swim it, though not comfortably, or carrying a dry gun—certainly not to bring back with me the carcass of a large deer. The horns, perhaps I might. Better the trophy than nothing.

I had half made up my mind to strip and swim to the island, when I bethought me of a boat, though with little hope of there being any near.

Along the river for miles there was no habitation. I had hunted there before and knew it. For all this, by a sort of involuntary inspiration, I glanced interrogatively around, with my eyes sweeping whatever of water-surface was in sight.

There was a boat in sight, but it was a "flat"—a regular "broad-horn," and, of

rendered to me by him who had hitherto occupied it; he scrambling up closer to the paddler at the bow.

"Half an hour, st'enger," he said, reminding me of the stipulated time. "We've agreed to give ye that. Ef we go anyt'ing, it we must charge more. A dollar for every ten minutes."

"All right!" I said, taking out my watch, to make note of the time. It was a gold-cased repeater, worth, with the chain, at least two hundred dollars.

After returning it to its fob, and looking into the faces of the two men, I felt a little regretful at having shown it; as also for having made display of my loose coin—some three hundred dollars I carried in gold and silver pieces. Two more sober sets of features I never saw in juxtaposition, and it was difficult to say which set was the more expressive of the true penitentiary type. After all, thought I, they are but boatmen—Mississippi boatmen—whom it may not be fair to judge either by their looks or general exterior.

I had no time to reflect. In less than five minutes the canoe struck the shore of the islet, and I was "dumped" out to look after my deer, on the tracks of which I came at the spot where we made landing.

Under the excitement of soon bringing my hunt to a successful conclusion, I paid little heed to aught else; though on parting from the canoe, I could not help noticing that the two boatmen held a hurried consultation in whispers, while one of them stepped ashore after me, saying he would go along, and if need be, give me assistance.

I made no objection, but kept on, my whole thoughts occupied in tracing the stag. The islet was not over three acres in extent, covered with an undergrowth of palmettoes. I knew the deer must be among them; and I was not long in discovering the coveted antlers, rising above the fan-shaped fronds, their owner lying concealed beneath, on what would no doubt have been his death-bed, had no one ever come near him. To hasten it, I raised my rifle, and taking aim at where his heart was still feebly beating, I fired.

There seemed to be two cracks simultaneously; but that might have been caused by the recoil of my gun, which appeared to burst in my hands; I could not tell then, for, after pulling the trigger, I became insensible.

When consciousness returned, I found myself alone, lying along the ground—with a



terrible aching in the head. Raising my hand to the spot, I felt an abrasure at the back of my skull, with a piece of the scalp missing. On returning the hand before my eyes, I saw my fingers were reddened with blood!

My senses gradually growing clearer, I gazed around, and soon perceived that I was alone, lying among palmettoes.

Staggering to my feet, I looked still further, and saw, at some distance, the dead body of the deer. I remembered having fired the shot that must have killed it. But my gun, that I supposed to have burst in my hands—where was that? It was not there—either lock, stock or barrel. And my watch, worth two hundred dollars; and the odd three hundred in coin, I had carried in my pockets? All gone, and along with them, the two canoe-men who had ferried me across to the island!

For a time I felt perplexed; but not for long. With my fast-clearing consciousness came the recollection of all that had transpired. I had heard two cracks—one I knew to be my own gun—the other, I now conceived, must have been a pistol, whose bullet, intended to pass through my brain, had only glanced off from the thickest part of my posterior skull, rendering me for the time insensible, and to all appearance dead. This was fortunate, else a second shot might have made things more sure, and left the Mississippi pirates free to continue their evil courses.

To them, no doubt very unexpectedly, these were soon after brought to an end. They had made a grand mistake in painting the name "Nancy" on the tender of their "broad-horn," since it enabled me to trace both craft to a point where they could be captured.

My sore head did not prevent me from swimming ashore, which I did soon afterward. Nor did it prevent me from galloping twenty miles down-stream, to the town of "Grand Gulf," where I knew the flat-boat would be delayed by the remarkable maelstrom which has given to this place its name.

I there found a justice of the peace, with a sheriff and posse, who were placed at my disposal; and when the "Nancy" came floating along, I found my gold watch, my gun, and my lost specie, in the possession of the two pirates, who, instead of reveling in the delights of New Orleans—at my expense, as they had intended—spent the next ten years of their lives in the State penitentiary of Mississippi.

SARAH LIMPKINS.

BY JOE JOE, JR.

Sal Limpkins ever since daybreak Combed the meadow with a rake.

Beneath her torn hat glowed the wealth Of many freckles and rustic health.

Singing she wrought, and her merry glee The tree-toad echoed from the tree.

But when she looked toward the far-off town, She saw Ben Jackson coming down.

Ben rode slowly down the lane, Holding on to his mule's mane.

He stopped his mule by winking his eye, And told the maid he was powerful dry.

From off the spring she raised the board, And gave him water in a gourd.

He blushed as he took it, looking down, And fidgeted to see her tattered gown.

Sweetly he spoke of crackers and cheese, Biled eggs and ham, and such things as these.

He talked of corns, and wondered whether The cloud in the west would bring any weather.

Sal eyed him with a pleased surprise, And with each one of her cross eyes.

He softly hit his mule with a stick, And he started off with a gentle kick.

Sal looked after him as he ran, And said, "I wish I had such a man."

Ben looked back as he blew his nose And said, "I wish I'd a wife like those."

"I wonder," said he, with great concern, "If she could be mine or I could be hers."

And his mother was scared that afternoon Because he acted just like a loon.

And Sal felt bad beside the well, And picked up the rake and raked a spell.

But well for them both their sweet hope flies Forward to future marriage-ties!

And in the hereafter which shall follow, Some person "ll make an extra dollar.

Beat Time's Notes.

MEN OF MARK.

"How wonderful is Man."

THE Hon. A. B. Sinian emigrated from New England with his family, which consisted of a wife and mule, at an early day, and settled on Slim Creek. It has been remarked that he didn't settle before he started, but that was only prejudice.

The Indians were then plenty and cheap, but he never scared any of them. It is due to Mr. Sinian to say he did not pass through any European college—in fact, he never went to school in his life.

When the war of 1812 broke out he was only one year old, and thereby missed much of his early renown. In 1840 his friends thought so much of him that they saw fit not to elect him to the position of county sheriff.

In 1845, after an exciting contest he was fortunate enough to be beaten in the race for county commissioner. Though holding no public trust, he was quite prominent in private trust, and about this time generously allowed the sheriff to sell his farm—moving to town, where he served his country by sawing wood.

In 1850 the President wanting a Minister to France, failed to appoint him, but a few months afterward a rich uncle of his died, and didn't leave him a cent.

The war opening in '61, he laid aside all party prejudices, and patriotically volunteered to command a regiment; but the place being filled already, he procured a commission as a general tenderer. He drove well, but failed to drive the country, and being much exhausted by the rigors of the campaign, he went to Washington, where he offered himself as a Cabinet-officer, and was immediately EXCEPTED. Returning home in triumph, he has since been living in serene retirement—at the poor-house.

When we reflect on what this remarkable man accomplished, who couldn't write his own name, does it not fill us with ah? We can exclaim: "There is a man who never pocketed the public funds, and never drew salary, even for himself!" There is much in such a life to come-mend. His farm is still there.

FLY NOTES.

"WELL done, or rare?" asked the waiter, in a question of beefsteak. "Well done, my good and faithful servant," said the traveler.

THE man who planted his foot on a rock had the satisfaction of raising a large boot-tree.

Is not a grass-widower in his hey-day?

THE man who couldn't catch an idea hadn't the right kind of a comb.

A BAD sign—signing your name to another man's note.

I DON'T like to see a man advocating great policies for government whose only law at home is his wife's.

TOPEKS generally keep away from water as if they had the hydrophobia, while others will use a little now and then, providing it is weakened with whiskey.

A JAW-BONE was a terrible weapon in the hand of Sampson. The jaw is now a worse weapon in the mouth of lovely woman.

PIGS are always pigs. They are divided into big pig, and little pig, and root hog or bust. These are subdivided into "another small piece, if you please, with some more of the gravy." Pigs give sausage, and are a subject that gives much food for thought, but shoo pig!

A GNAT is a great deal smaller than it is large; in fact it is just about the right size to crawl in your eye and cover up. They swarm round your head, and are very easy to inhale, but are a light diet. They are the smallest things I know of except a stingy man's soul, which might enter a gnat's ear and not affect its hearing.

ONE-HALF of the anger that a man feels in being swindled is not because he is swindled, but that he failed to swindle the other.

I DOTE on mushrooms. They are a splendid—well, I don't know if they are bird or fish, as I never caught one. Some people say they are a cross between a gingham umbrella and a toad-stool.

I HAVEN'T as much faith as I ought to have in a man who lectures an audience on "promptness," and then gets left by the next train.

I KNOW a man who is so miserly that if he was working for ten dollars a week, and you would offer him nine dollars and ninety cents to stop, he'd work all the week and make the other cent.

BEAT TIME.